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with our gift guide

Desk bound?

TIPS TO KEEP MOBILE

Monster report

Loch Ness Marathon

Choosing Shoes?

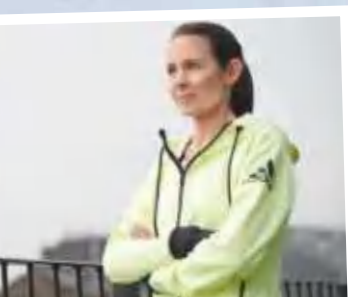
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KIT BAG**

>> Run essentials



**TRAIL SHOES
PART II**

>> Full round-up



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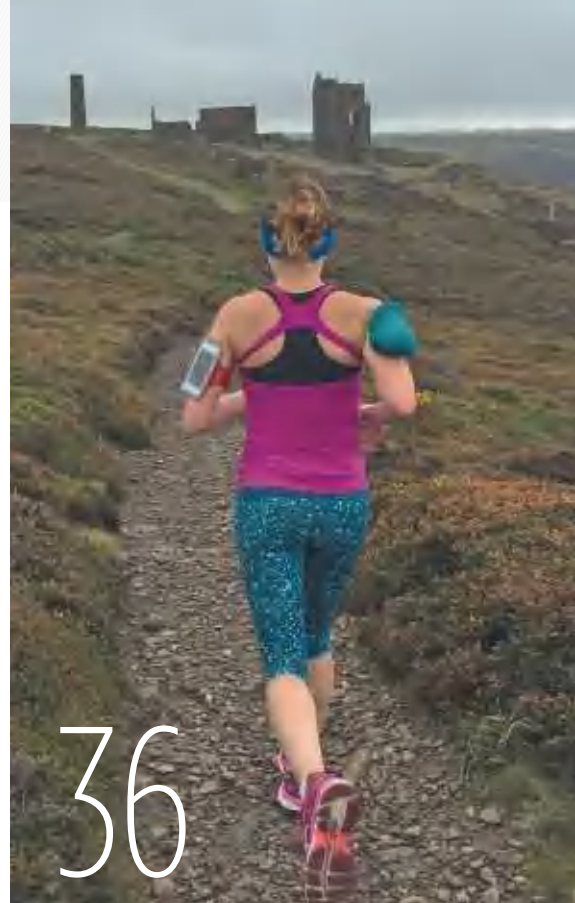
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KYLE LANGFORD
SHONA RICHARDS
YASMIN MILLER

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YOUNG GUNS

THE NEXT LEVEL

Britain's young athletes are taking it to the next level as the countdown to Rio 2016 continues. Kyle is leading the way with a Worlds appearance under his belt, but the rest of the Young Guns - David, Shona, and Yasmin - have each made progress as they aim to be on the plane for next year's trip to Brazil. We're following them closely, so head online to Pro:Direct Running for exclusive insight into what it takes to rise to the top.



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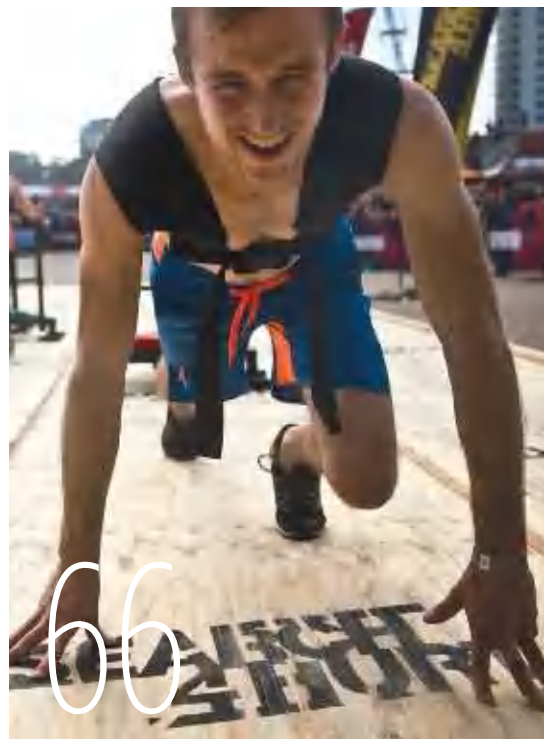
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Upcoming races for the end of 2015 as well as the new year.

WELCOME



It's taken a long time getting here, but I think it's finally winter. Which means muddy shoes, waterproof lightweight jackets and generally a lot more paraphernalia for runners. That does make Christmas easy for your friends and family though, and our gift guide this month has everything from stocking fillers to blow-out buys

– I suggest you leave the magazine open at p43 on the coffee table and hope someone takes the hint. If you want to embrace the turn in the weather, you might be thinking about **taking up trail running**. Off road tracks and trails are never so much fun as when they're muddy, and our beginners' guide to trail on p33 will arm you with all you need to get started. As a city dweller, I've never really dabbled in this kind of running, but this month I took the plunge and went **coastal running in Cornwall**. Aside from the initial shock that there was no way I was getting close to a PB, it was a really enlightening trip, and I recommend anyone to try it – it's a **whole different way of running**. You can read my full account on p36. In fact, I enjoyed it so much that I even took a last-minute trip mountain running in Tenerife – so much for embracing the cold!

AMY CURTIS, EDITOR

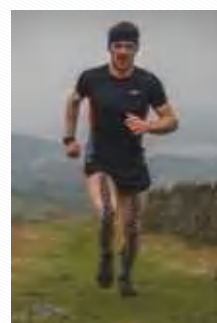
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13 ISSUES
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3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS MONTH...

P29 Working in an office can really affect your fitness. Sarah Russell outlines some easy exercises to do during the working day to keep your body moving.



P39 Sticky tape might just help you run through injury. An expert from RockTapeUK talks us through the theory behind kinesiology tape and how it could work for you.

P82 The days are shorter so it's time to go into the night. We look at our five favourite after-dark events taking place this winter.



THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS



JO PAVEY: In a quick chat with *Running Fitness*, Jo tells us what's in her kit bag whenever she goes out training. p60



DR YVETTE BRINDLE: Running Fitness' resident GP tells us about how dermatitis sufferers can take steps to avoid winter weather worsening their condition. p59



EVIE SERVENTI: Ever have trouble staying focused before a big event? Evie tells us how to train our minds to bring out the best of ourselves when it matters most. p53



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HUMAN RACE OFF-ROAD SERIES

If you fancy a muddy running challenge this winter, then head over to humanrace.co.uk and check out the off-road trail running series. There are three thrilling events on the calendar all located in the South East on Army Training Grounds – WildMan 21 November, IceMan 5 December and the MudMan on 5 March 2016. At each event there is a choice of two run distances, an off-road duathlon and a relay duathlon. Each one has a different challenge, but they all promise lots of mud and plenty of hills. They're tough, demanding and challenging... what more could you want on a Saturday morning?



WOODS, OBSTACLES, LAKES & FIELDS... WILD RUNNING

WOLF RUN



2016 EVENTS

SPRING WOLF 9TH & 10TH APR 2016

SUMMER WOLF 11TH & 12TH JUN 2016

AUTUMN WOLF 3RD & 4TH SEP 2016

WINTER WOLF 5TH & 6TH NOV 2016

TAKE ON THE CHALLENGE THEWOLFRUN.COM

THIS MONTH

Amazon launches a **DEDICATED RUNNING STORE**, obesity is overtaking activity and new research says we need to be getting a lot more sleep...

RUNNING IS MEDICINE, SAY WORLD RECORD HOLDERS

New research released ahead of National Stress Awareness Day (4 Nov) reported:

50,000 tweets are posted daily on health-related stress

Body image and sleep are the most tweeted-about health worries

More people tweet about health-related stress than work, money or marriage anxiety

Health is the second most tweeted-about cause of stress, prompting a new post every 10 seconds

The research is timely - as legendary marathoners Haile Gebrselassie and Wilson Kipsang, who were in New York for an Adidas-hosted pack run in Central Park, said they believe running will continue to grow.

"The best medicine is sweat. The cure for stress is to move, to work hard physically, and the simplest way to do that is to run," said Gebrselassie, a double Olympic gold track medalist and former marathon world record holder.



IMAGE: MAXSPORT / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Go virtual shopping

Amazon.co.uk has launched the Running Store – a one-stop shop for runners. Buy shoes, clothing, fitness technology, apps, books, music, nutrition, safety gear and hydration packs from key brands such as ASICS, Puma, Mizuno, Fitbit and New Balance. The Running Shoe Selector feature also helps you spot the perfect trainers by identifying foot shape, gait and activity.



Download to up your fitness

New app Bounts, together with Sport England and England Athletics, have launched the Netmums Run app, which aims to get over 10,000 women and men into running. The app provides motivation, guidance and rewards, all of which have been shown to encourage people to take up and stick with physical activity. Through the Netmums website, members can sign up to use the app which provides training plans and educational material from England Athletics. See: bounts.it or download the Netmums Run app from Android Play store or The App Store.



Wise up as you get older

Researchers looked at the running performance of 110 runners aged 18 to 60 to analyse what happens to biomechanics as a runner gets older (in other words – why do we slow down?!). The findings, published in *Medicine & Science in Sports and Exercise* found that as runners age, they lose elasticity and power in ankles and calves, and that loss isn't picked up by another muscle group, like the hips. Instead, the runner simply loses stride length and the power that supplies a more supple stride. This highlights the importance of looking after calves and Achilles daily with stretching and foam rolling.



SORE KNEES? THEN GET MOVING

New research hints that being active could improve knee health and lead to fewer knee issues such as osteoarthritis – making activities like running key. In their study on cartilage deflation, researchers at the University of Delaware in the US investigated whether hydrodynamic pressurisation could refill deflated cartilage, which led to their proposing a mechanism that explains how motion can cause cartilage to reabsorb liquid that leaks out. Loss of synovial fluid in cartilage tissue results in a gradual decrease in cartilage thickness and increase in friction – symptoms of osteoarthritis. If this can be reversed, knee health might well be restored.



BRITS NEED MORE SLEEP!

New research presented at the British Sleep Society Conference in Newcastle in October revealed:

25% of the UK population is sleeping as little as five hours each night.

25% of 30- to 50-year-olds are dissatisfied with their sleep.

The **50+ AGE GROUP** had the best control over their body clocks, and claimed to

be the most satisfied with their sleep.

Most of us aim to have **8-9 HRS** sleep a night but end up having significantly less (about 5hrs).

Sources of **POOR SLEEP PATTERNS** are down to increased demands of work/family life and social media.

There's a significant gap between how much sleep people **THINK THEY NEED** or and how much they actually get.



OBESITY UP, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DOWN

Alarming new figures show grassroots sports participation in Britain is plunging while obesity keep rising. Government figures show the number of people aged 16 and above playing sport at least once a week has dropped by 400,000 (that's Bristol's population!) since the 2012 Olympics. Ian Stephens, Chairman of the LGA's Culture, Tourism and Sport Board said: "Local government has seen its funding reduced by 40% since 2010, including a recent £200m cut to the in-year public health budget. Councils need the opportunity to spend this sports funding in the most effective way – on the parks, playing fields and facilities where it can best reach most people."

WHAT'S YOUR SHOE?

Shoe brands worn in the marathon leg of the Ironman at Kona, Hawaii, this year are: Asics (17.5%; the GEL-DS RACER 10 £90, below, was popular) followed by Saucony (14.3%), Newton (9.2%), Brooks (9.2%), Adidas (7.2%) and Hoka One One, whose market share is impressive with the brand jumping from 1.4% in 2011 to 11.6% today. While Asics are down from their 2009 figure of 29.1%, Saucony are up from 11% in 2009 and other brands remain stable. Stats first published by *Lava Magazine*



THIS MONTH'S NEWS IN BRIEF

A few of our favourite snippets from the news this month

» MARATHON TURNS INTO DATE MAGNET

Steve Bergstrom, a single 30-year-old marketing professional, decided to turn his back into a billboard while running the Chicago marathon this month, hoping to find a girlfriend. With little spare time to date due to work and fitness, Steve's aim was to find a fellow athlete who could share/appreciate his busy schedule. The message, written directly onto his back, read: 'SINGLE / on Facebook / Steve Bergstrom' on his back instead of his front, so that fellow runners would see it, instead of spectators. Twelve women contacted Steve after the race, he's had a few chats on facebook and one date, to date. I wouldn't try this in the UK – it's freezing!



» VITAMIN D - THE LOWDOWN

There's a huge lack of awareness in the UK about the importance of vitamin D for good health. Did you know... There are two sources of vitamin D in the UK: exposure to sunlight or skin synthesis (main source) and via diet. There are few naturally vitamin D-rich foods, and most people only get around five micrograms (mg) from their diets. 10mg of vitamin D is the recommended daily dose from the age of four. If you are deficient, try BetterYou DLux oral spray, available in different strengths. It's recommended by the Dept of Health and listed on the NHS recommended product guide for vit D supplementation. See: betteryou.com. Source: Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition

POSTBOX

We'd love to hear your views, news and reviews

Running Fitness



SEND YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALL THINGS RUNNING

TO: AMY CURTIS, Editor, *Running Fitness* magazine, Kelsey Media, Cudham Tithe Barn, Berry's Hill, Cudham, Kent TN16 3AG



CONTACT BY EMAIL ON: rf.ed@kelsey.co.uk



A NEW WAY TO FOCUS

TECH-FREE RUNNING

I would like to tell you my story of mindful running. After reading your article on mindful running I thought this could be the perfect

opportunity to chase my beloved 10k PB while also helping me with my anxiety, although to be honest I have used a lot of techniques in the past and didn't hold out much hope.

So on a recent Sunday I decided to ditch the headphones and try out your techniques. I found it very hard at first as I am used to my usual music while running and am not used to hearing my breath, my feet stomping on the ground and all the noises around me. I actually nearly stopped at one point as I found it quite strange. But after around 3k I found myself relaxing taking in the moment and running didn't seem so hard, in fact I can say that my usual aches and pains didn't seem to be there any more. I should also tell you that I decided that I would not look at my pace until at least three quarters of the way around and when I did look at my watch I had run 9k and was pretty much dead on my PB which I had not come close to in well over two years. At the end of the 10k I had a new PB beating my old one by four seconds. To be honest I won't always use mindful running as I love my music too much, but I will definitely be using it again to chase my new elusive 10k!

ADAM SHERIDAN

OUR LETTER OF THE MONTH WINNER CAN CHOOSE BETWEEN THIS FABULOUS ANITA SPORTS BRA (AMAZON.CO.UK RRP £50) OR TWO SETS OF MEN'S RUNNING BOXERS FROM RUNDERWEAR (RUNDERWEAR.CO.UK, RRP £36)



WHAT A BOOST!

Thank you so much... I just got the Winter 2015 *Running Fitness* and read Tony Philips (A Mile Each Day). I'm due to do my first 10k race... And bricking it! I've been thinking what the hell am I doing? I'm a fraud. I can't run. I'm always last. And

tomorrow I'm once again going be lining up with all these "fast real" runners... However, Tony has brought me back to reality. A couple of years ago I could barely walk as I was in so much pain with arthritis. I thought, this is it; this is old age (at 54). However fast forward three years

and I've lost two stone and am running. I do parkrun when I can and am now doing 10k tomorrow and, next week, the Great South Run. Tonight I felt like giving up but Tony's words have reminded me how far I've come... And how I am a winner.

Theresa Cloake



YOUR TWEETS THIS MONTH

@charliecrossway "Just picked up your mag for the first time. Really enjoying it. Easy to read, great pictures and motivational"

@WallingsLee "Was due to be running my first marathon today at Chelmsford for J Hospice, had to pull out due to injury gutted! Good luck to all @Runfitmag"

@DoshLtd "Be better than you were yesterday. #leadership #running @Runfitmag"

JOIN THE CONVERSATION
@Runfitmag



ON FACEBOOK THIS MONTH

Do you prefer running solo or with a buddy?

Nicola Hunniset: "I'm competitive so like having someone to push me"

Aaron Hindes: "Solo all the way. Just listen to music and run."

Sarah Fonseca: "Much better to run with a friend."

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SARAH RUSSELL

Immunity

Sarah shares her **TOP TIPS** for staying healthy and boosting your immunity this winter

Being struck down with a cough, cold or flu can be really frustrating and miserable, especially when you're training for an event or you just want to get out and go for a run. But is it inevitable? It doesn't have to be – there's a lot you can do to protect yourself and minimise the chances of succumbing to illness.

Flu is the worst. I speak from experience last year when I forgot to get my jab and ended up in hospital. Speak to your GP about whether or not you qualify for a flu jab on the NHS. If you have an underlying condition such as asthma, getting flu may not just put a dent in your running, but it can make you really poorly. You can pay for a private jab at your local pharmacy if you prefer. Lloyds Pharmacies offer the flu jab for £10 or Boots for £12.99

Avoid overtraining. Manage your training load and get the balance right between mileage, intensity and duration. Try taking the Daily Analyses of Life Demands for Athletes (DALDA) questionnaire (available online) to monitor your response to training and be honest if you're feeling tired or struggling; if this is the case you should take some time off or even just adapt your training load. Keeping your training intensity down may also reduce your risk of catching a cold. So it might be a good idea to try to go easy on the speedwork and races this winter.

LISTEN TO THE BEAT

Monitor your resting heart-rate. In bed, before you get up, take your pulse and get a base-line measurement over three days. Then periodically take your pulse and record it. A higher-than-normal resting pulse can be an indication of overtraining or incoming illness. If your heart-rate is 5-10 beats higher than normal, then take a day off.

Fuelling up after training is one of the most important ways you can help protect your immunity. When you become glycogen depleted your cortisol level (stress hormone) rises, which can impact your immune function and ability to fight infection. Make sure you eat and drink within 30 minutes of finishing a run, especially if it was hard or long. Try a recovery shake such as 'For Goodness Shakes' or a simple chocolate milkshake for the right balance of carbs and protein.

If you want to avoid a cold, remember these three words: 'Wash Your Hands'. Colds spread through droplets containing germs on places like doorknobs, phones, keyboards etc. You touch those items, then unwittingly touch your nose or mouth, and the next thing you know you're infected. Regular hand washing – around five times per day – is the key. Use soap and hot water, scrub under your nails and dry thoroughly.

Get enough sleep. According to a study in

2009 at Carnegie University, people who had fewer than seven hours sleep were three times more likely to catch a cold than those who got eight hours or more. Don't skimp on your sleep, especially if you're training hard.

Even if you eat a healthy diet, you can boost your immunity by making sure you take the right supplements. It's estimated that one in five people in the UK have low levels of Vitamin D and the Department of Health recommends a daily supplement. Try Better You DLux 3000 (betteryou.com) £7.96 for 15ml spray. I also love Immune Biotix by Quest – a complex blend of beta glucans and vitamins to aid immune function (questexcellence.com); they cost £16.46 for 30 capsules.

LITTLE EXTRAS

Although quality scientific evidence is lacking, I've always found a preventative nose spray to be really effective at the first hint of a cold. Theoretically, it works by trapping the virus in the nasal passage before it has a chance to take hold. Try 'First Defence', £6.49 from Boots. Use it 4-6 times per day at the first sign of a tickle or scratchy throat.

Wrap up and stay warm. Research from the Cardiff Common Cold Centre has found that staying warm, keeping your feet dry and avoiding becoming 'chilled' can help lower your risk of catching a cold. Yes, it seems that Grandma was right after all. Change out of wet or cold running kit as soon as you can after a run and warm up with a shower or bath. Keeping your feet warm and dry may also help – try Dexshell Waterproof socks (dexshell.co.uk) and a Buff for your mouth and neck (buffwear.co.uk).

What do you do to stay healthy in the winter? Tweet us at @runfitmag or @runfitsarah

Regular hand washing – around five times per day – is the key.

Sarah Russell has over 20 years experience in the fitness industry as a running coach, trainer, freelance writer and athlete. She also has a Masters degree in Sport Science and is a qualified England Athletics running coach sarah-russell.co.uk

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

'Run often, run long, but never outrun your joy of running.'
JULIE ISPHORDING, US FORMER OLYMPIC MARATHON RUNNER



Take some simple precautions and avoid the sniffles this winter.

WHAT'S ON IN FEBRUARY?

Spring is just around the corner, but there are plenty of events to get to before the winter is through. Here are our favourites:

COASTAL TRAIL SERIES SOUTH DEVON

DATE: 6 February

WHAT: Now in its 10th year, the South Devon CTS event has become a cult classic. The course is contained within an AONB and is picturesque and punishing in equal measure. Options of 10k, Half Marathon, Marathon and Ultra – all trail and all very tough!

endurancelife.com

OLD DEER PARK RICHMOND HALF MARATHON

DATE: 21 February

WHAT: One of the fastest half marathon courses around, suited to both beginner and faster runners. This is a great course to achieve a PB. Scenery along the route includes Old Deer Park, Kew Gardens, and River Thames, with over 70% of the course along the tow path.

energizedsports.com

THE ENDURANCE SHOW SANDOWN PARK – FEATURING THE SANDOWN GALLOPS

DATE: 27-28 February

WHAT: The show features everything and anything to do with running, endurance, triathlon and has a wide range of seminars, workshops, exhibitors and the Sandown Gallops – 1 mile, 5k and 10k races – all free for show visitors. Don't miss it! We'll be there.

enduranceshow.com



3 OF THE BEST... WINTER RUNNING HATS

KEEP YOUR HEAD WARM DURING THOSE LONG WINTER RUNS WITH ONE OF THESE GREAT OPTIONS



Intensity Hat £20

1 Ideal for the cold winter months, this polyknit hat has excellent moisture management, soft flatlock seams for unrivalled wearer comfort and a fast drying time.

odlo.com



Greenlight Beanie £22

2 Available in four colours, this unisex reversible beanie from Brooks is made from moisture wicking fabric and has a brushed finish for extra warmth.

brooksrunning.com



Gore Running Essential Light Beany

3 £16.99

Comfort and warmth without being bulky. This unisex beany offers lightweight protection from the cold. Great for races.

goreapparel.co.uk

JAMIE RAMSAY

British Adventure Runner Jamie Ramsay is running c.17,000km from Vancouver to Buenos Aires, **AVERAGING A MARATHON PER DAY** to raise money for CALM, Macmillan and WaterAid

My first memory of running was aged about 10. It was a school run and a teacher who was tired of seeing me dawdling at the rear chatting with friends gave me a kick up the arse and told me if I didn't finish first I would have detention. That's when I realised I could actually run. Ever since then I have been into running of some variety be it triathlon, marathons, commuting or just general fitness.

Most of my recent running has been in London and generally as a form of commuting. I would either run to or from work along the Thames. I do enjoy running with other people but preferably if they are of the same pace or can push me a little harder. I've had some great 'races' with other commuters along the Thames embankment; running home in London would take me the same time as taking the underground. All you need to do is find 30 minutes 3-5 times a week and you'll notice the difference both physically and mentally.

I love entering competitions but I never expect to win or do very well. I just love taking part in big sporting occasions.

A WORTHY CHALLENGE

To do this expedition I needed to undertake something that justified me stopping work. A couple of marathons really wouldn't have cut it. I started looking at around the world and through Africa but soon realised that there were lots of issues with visas, languages and potentially risky areas. Someone then suggested the Americas and the more I looked at it, the more sense it made. The British passport grants me access to all the countries and I only need to learn one new language, Spanish. Additionally, despite what people think, all the countries are safe and full of the most genuine and helpful people.

The total run will be about 17,000km but this number does change as I alter my running route. The route is equivalent to

over 400 marathons and takes me through 14 different countries – Canada, America, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile and Argentina. I think I can now safely call myself a cross country runner in the literal sense. Logistically I will be transporting all my equipment in a Thule Chariot Cheetah running stroller and will seek shelter wherever I can find it at the end of each day – be it a hotel, a friendly local's house or in my tent.

STAYING ON TRACK

Touch wood, so far everything is going fantastically. I try very hard to keep motivating myself forward and not letting myself get stuck at beaches or party towns. This is a running expedition not a holiday. My itinerary is dictated by distance not tourist attractions and that can lead to some truly amazing experiences.

Of course there are some injuries along the way as I am asking a lot of my body by averaging over a marathon per running day. The main issues come from Plantar Fasciitis and this then manifests into other aches and pains. But you learn to recognise what your body is telling you. In the past pain used to mean stop but I have realised that that is not the case. Pain is the body's way of warning you that something is wrong and suggesting that you should change the way you are doing something. If the body wants you to stop, it will physically make you stop. I am learning how to push myself past all the perceived barriers I had before and this is allowing me to accomplish so much more.

Also, having the right kit helps. Adidas has provided me with Ultra Boost running shoes, which are as comfortable as slippers, and wearing 1000 Mile Socks means I haven't had a single blister. Nutrition is the next part of my running that I need to address. The diet in this part of the world is not that healthy and I am

currently fuelled by fizzy drinks, fried food and a lot of double carbing (rice and chips on the same plate).

I have adapted my stroller so it has a small speaker system that allows me to listen to podcasts. I have been learning so much from podcasts about running (Marathon Talk), interviews with inspirational people (Girl on Guy, Nerdist.com) and history (History Extra, History of the world in 100 objects). I am also completely up to date with the UK top 40 and The Archers!

I am constantly thinking about where else I would like to run – Madagascar, Mongolia, and across Australia are all goals but if I had to choose one it would probably be to the North or South Pole.

MAKE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

The great thing about running is that it is addictive. A lot of people say they "can't" run more than a mile but if you push yourself through that mile then everything gets easier and you will start enjoying it. As part of my training I used to get the tube to different stations across London and then make my way home. This would add an element of adventure to my running and would make it more than just a run.

I'm also raising money for three charities: Calm (Prevention of Male Suicide), Macmillan (Cancer Care) and WaterAid (Clean Water Provision). Wanting to raise money for these charities gives me that extra motivation to keep pushing myself. I now only take days off to do admin. I feel a bit lost when I am not on the road!

RF



Jamie has customised his stroller to carry all he needs and play podcasts to keep him moving.

See more at www.jamieisrunning.com. Follow Jamie at [Facebook.com/jamieisrunning](https://www.facebook.com/jamieisrunning), [@jamieisrunning](https://www.instagram.com/jamieisrunning), Instagram and YouTube under [jamieisrunning](https://www.youtube.com/jamieisrunning).

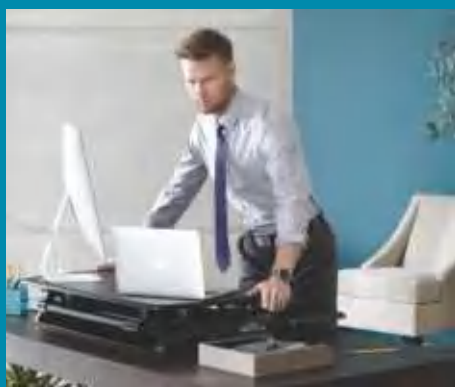
I think I can now safely call myself a cross country runner in the literal sense



IMAGE CHRIS SKONE-ROBERTS, CHRIS-JAN GARCIA

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MATT PHILLIPS

INJURY SPECIALIST

Each issue Matt shares a new exercise of the month. Follow his **FOAM ROLLING** technique for your calves to release knots and help to restore normal muscle mechanics

TARGET MUSCLE/S: Calves

SETS & REPS: 5-10 minutes

TEMPO: Slow, avoid pain of over 6/10

FREQUENCY: Evenings (in front of the TV!)

Many runners find regular foam rolling helps them through rehab and to keep injury away. Though the mechanism behind foam rolling is still heavily debated, it seems that five to ten minutes a night is a small price to pay if it

proves to help you, especially in times of increased miles, speed and inclines. Think of it as doing the same as a massage therapist. By placing your body weight onto the roller, you are looking for 'knots' in the muscle. The knots are thought to be adhesions in the fascia (fibrous layer that surrounds muscles) that appear in response to injury or inactivity. They may prevent normal muscle mechanics by reducing joint range of motion, muscle tone and length, leading to decreased strength, endurance and coordination. Foam rolling helps break down adhesions and restore normal muscle mechanics.



1 Place roller under the calf muscle (not on the Achilles tendon)



2 Using your arms, lift your body off floor and roll the calf to find an area of sensitivity (of less than 7/10 discomfort).



3 Once you find a sensitive area, lower your body back down onto the floor and roll that area.



4 If you are struggling to find areas of significant tension, cross the other leg over so its weight adds pressure.

When searching for areas of sensitivity, remember to rotate your body in order to check inside and outside of leg. Another way of rolling the calves is maintaining pressure on a sensitive area and rotating the ankle (in either direction).

TOP TIPS:

» Foam rolling can be particularly painful, especially if it is your first time. Subjecting your body to too much pain is never a good idea as it can provoke your nervous system to become over sensitive and output even more pain. If the pain is over a six out of 10 (where 10 is the worst pain you have ever felt) adjust your body position to reduce the discomfort.

» Effective rolling requires a few minutes of searching for sensitive areas followed by dedicated rolling, not a quick 20 seconds. Rolling while reading a book or watching television can be a good idea to ensure sufficient time is spent.

» When rolling the calves, you do not have to keep the backside off the floor for the whole duration. Once you have found a 'knot', lower your bottom to the floor. You will still have enough body weight to stimulate a six out of 10 pain, especially if you cross one leg over the other.

FOR VIDEOS OF HOW TO DO OUR EXERCISES OF THE MONTH, go to runningfitnessmag.com/!

MATT PHILLIPS

is a Running Injury Specialist & Video Gait Analyst at StrideUK & Studio57clinic in Sussex. Follow Matt on Twitter: @sportinjurymatt
StrideUK is one of the UK's leading running technique companies which takes pride in helping people reduce injury and improve running performance by using clinical video gait analysis to examine your running technique and provide simple, easy to follow training programmes to get you injury free. For more information please visit strideuk.com



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LAURA FOUNTAIN

LAZY GIRL RUNNING

There are many different reasons why people queue up at the start-line to run 26.2 miles. Laura learns an **IMPORTANT LESSON** from her 16th marathon

Each marathon I've run has taught me something different. My first taught me I'm capable of more than I realised, while my second that the distance needs to be respected. Marathon number five was all about not trusting the weather forecast and the importance of taking extra kit options to overseas races, and lining up for marathon number 16, the lessons still keep coming.

I shouldn't really call it marathon number 16, it being the first marathon that I didn't finish; the first that I've not made it to the end of, the first that has the letters DNF next to my name.

BOURNEMOUTH MARATHON

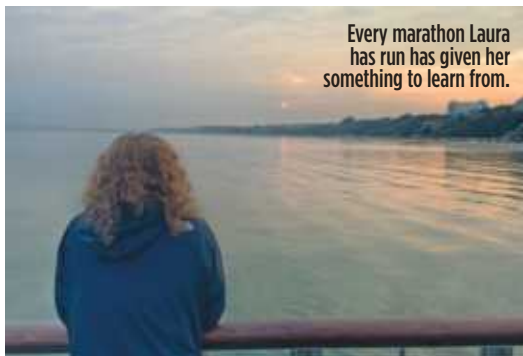
I'd put a lot of work into training for the Bournemouth Marathon. I'd set myself the goal of running 3:30 and I'd been out clocking up more miles a week than I'd ever run before, ticking off my speedwork and getting up early to train before work.

But after my last long run, once all the training was in the bank, I developed a niggle in my right leg that got progressively worse as race day approached. For the last 10 days before the race, running was out of the question. My taper was extreme to say the least. I stubbornly wanted to give the race a shot though and, despite what I knew deep down, come Sunday morning I pinned my number on and headed to the start.

The race started at 10am under blue skies; the conditions were perfect. As I started running, the eight-minute miles came easily and I was holding the pace that would take me to that 3:30 goal. My leg felt okay, but not perfect, and everything was going better than I'd hoped. But by the time I got to mile 10 I was beginning to doubt my decision to run.

DNF

I made it to half way before stopping. As I stepped



Every marathon Laura has run has given her something to learn from.

Carrying on when you're not enjoying it is not always the right thing to do.



LAURA FOUNTAIN

Laura Fountain is a marathon and ultra runner, a triathlete and a personal trainer. She teaches beginners how to run and helps them fall in love with running.

Follow Laura on Twitter: @lazygirlrunning

off the course I felt a bit of a fraud. The marshal who opened the barrier for me to step through asked me if I was okay and the honest answer was, yes. I wasn't in pain. I hadn't hit a wall. I wasn't unwell. I knew I could finish. I've finished harder races in worse states but a 3:30 was looking doubtful.

Should I have carried on regardless, toughed it out, got my medal and a time that I was bound to be disappointed with? Different people will have different thoughts on that because marathon running means different things to all of us. We all line up at the start for different reasons. For me, marathons are something I do for fun. When it stops being fun, it's time to stop running.

So what did I learn from this race? I learnt that DNFs don't hurt nearly as much as I'd feared, and a lot less than my slightly battered right leg does.



When it stops being fun, it's time to stop running



TONY PHILLIPS

A MILE EACH DAY

Tony explains how his daily mile has **CHANGED HIS LIFE**, and why running will make you a more resilient, positive and confident person

'LIFE BEGINS AT THE END OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE' – **NEALE DONALD WALSCH**

Running fits in so perfectly with what I do for a living. Running, or any kind of physical exercise, as well as being a powerful way of improving physical fitness and health, is as (if not more) powerful when it comes to improving mental fitness and health.

Having run a mile each day for well over five years now, I know this to be true on a personal level. In my capacity as a support coach for a local running group I can also attest to the transformations I've witnessed in terms of increased confidence, self-esteem and outlook on life, from new runners who've taken to running and love how it makes them feel.

NEWFOUND CONFIDENCE

Amazing changes occur when people step outside their front door, and their existing comfort zone, to start doing something new like running. You can actually see it. They start to think: 'if I can do this when I didn't believe I could before, I wonder what else I could do that I've been avoiding?'

Our comfort zones expand when we step outside of them or stretch them. We meet new people, learn new skills, have new experiences and surprise ourselves, and we discover we like the feeling. Not to mention the energy we feel from improving and strengthening our aerobic system. And we want more.

Resilience has been a buzz word in business for a while now. Running can improve your resilience too. Again, I know it's true from my daily morning miles. Research shows that resilience, sometimes known as 'bouncebackability' (it's probably not a real word but I like it) is strengthened by such things as having a positive 'can do' attitude, a good support structure and a purpose that's bigger than yourself.

Is it any surprise then that someone who takes up running and joins a beginners' running group with a goal of training to be able to run a race to raise money for a charity dear to their heart, can deal with

Our comfort zones expand when we step outside of them or stretch them

Physical challenge helps your mental attitude.



TONY PHILLIPS

is a personal coach working with entrepreneurs and business leaders. An enthusiastic back of the pack runner, in January 2010 he began an experiment to see how many consecutive days he could run at least a mile. Tony is fascinated by the lessons running and daily habits teach him about life.

Follow Tony on Twitter: @AMileEachDay or coachingapproach.co.uk

knock backs? And pick themselves back up much quicker than others?

INCREASED POSITIVITY

My morning mile helps me connect with my positive side, boosts my 'can do' feelings and sets me up for success in what I'm doing that day. When I face challenges it helps me focus on the outcome I want and what it will be like when I get it, instead of focusing on the problem and how unlucky I am to have it. When you focus on a problem, why it happened, whose fault it is and what possible negative impact it could have, it tends to magnify the problem and suck any energy you have out of you. When you focus on the solution and visualise (see our mind feature, p53) what it will be like when you've reached it, the opposite happens. You feel excited, inspired and energised.

Is it really surprising that when you look at a challenge after you've run, that you're already in a more energised state and better able to focus on what you want rather than what you don't want?

One of my favourite quotes from Muhammad Ali explains what's beyond your comfort zone rather well I think: "Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small men who find it easier to live in the world they've been given than to explore the power they have to change it. Impossible is not a fact. It's an opinion. Impossible is not a declaration. It's a dare. Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary. Impossible is nothing."

My daily mile has certainly made the impossible possible for me!





DAN TYE

REACH NEW HEIGHTS

Daytime adventuring is one thing, but participating in an **EVENT AT NIGHT** is enough to push even the most experienced of us out of our comfort zones

Well, the dark evenings and the dark mornings are here. There will be plenty more of them in the months to come. I'm not saying all this in a doom and gloom way. In fact, winter might be the time to get out and perhaps put in even more miles than you did in the summer. While the dedicated runners among us will have no qualms about heading out for a run around the block in the dark, the thought of venturing into the fells might be one step too far – yes, even if we're wearing the world's best head torch.

Stating the obvious; going out at night makes it easier to get lost. The thing is, we're wired up to be scared of what we can't see, but there really isn't anything to fear about navigating at night – that's if you know what to do of course.

A FEW TIPS I USE:

I split down each nav leg into much smaller distances than I might attempt in daylight. I also make sure my compass bearings are spot on and I take my time to measure distances on the map carefully and then pace as accurately as I can. An easy way to build up to navigating at night is to get up early, just before sunrise so at least you can see that it is gradually getting lighter. It's less intimidating this way. Or persuade someone else to come with you, you'll be less scared having them there, plus you can double check each other's calculations or correct each other if mistakes are creeping in. Now, the thought of this kind of navigation will either have you running to put fresh batteries in your head torch or you'll be snuggling back down into the sofa...

MARMOT DARK MOUNTAINS

I've seen quite a few tweets about an event called 'Marmot Dark Mountains' lately. Billed as 'the overnight winter mountain marathon', you don't need much imagination to work out what's involved. As it says on the event's website, marmot-dark-mountains.com, it's the usual two-day mountain marathon format, just with a darker twist. The 4th Marmot Dark Mountains will be held on the night of Saturday 30 January 2016, finishing on the morning of Sunday 31. Easily time to prepare if you start now.

I've seen quite a few guided running firms offering night navigation courses aimed at equipping you with the skills and, more importantly, the confidence to take part in a run like this. Thankfully it's a pairs event, so you'll have a companion to set out with. And there's a choice of Elite, A, B, C, Long and

Don't be scared; running in the dark could be the new black!



DAN TYE

took a love of cross-country running and outdoor pursuits with him into the RAF as a pilot. The call of the mountains was too great though and he became a ski instructor in Canada, before working as a journalist for the past 10 years. He now edits an online adventure lifestyle blog called Adventure 52, where he encourages everyone to make the most of his or her 52 weeks a year. Find him at: @Adventure52mag or adventure52.com

Short Score courses. In the Elite class last year, ten pairs entered, nine of these ten started but only five pairs finished with Adam Perry and Kim Collison taking the win in a time of 08:14:24, so that gives you some idea of how long the fastest complete the event. The long course competitors set off first so they have the full experience of running from dusk-to-dawn. It means they are actually out on the fells as it begins to turn dark – for some that's a bit disconcerting. The short course runners set off later, in the dark. This way all the competitors finish within an hour of each other on Sunday morning. At the end there's a breakfast and you can get some sleep at the event centre before travelling home.

If you want to find out more about MDM then you should read some of the previous years' reports. If you're still excited by the idea of a running at night in the last weekend of January, then I give you ten flashes of my head torch in respect.



An easy way to build up to navigating at night is to get up early so at least you can see it's getting lighter

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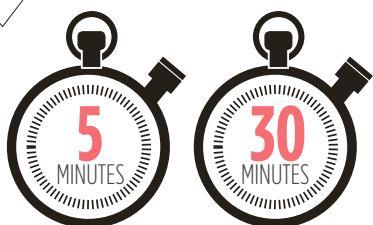
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RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Cranberry & Pecan Christmas Energy Bars



PREP TIME **COOK TIME**
Makes 8 large bars

INGREDIENTS FOR 8 BARS

100g self-raising wholemeal flour
2 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
100g dark brown sugar
200g dried cranberries
100g pecans, roughly chopped
200g soft, pitted dates,

roughly chopped
1 heaped tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp ground ginger
½ tsp ground nutmeg
Grated zest of 2 oranges
2 large eggs

Why is it good for you? As a *Running Fitness* reader you're likely to be pretty fit. In which case, quite frankly, life's too short to turn down the odd mince pie. But with festivities starting earlier each year, getting the balance right can be a struggle. Loaded with heart-friendly omega-3s, B-vitamins, the antioxidant and anti-inflammatory vitamin E, as well as potassium, calcium and iron, and with virtually no saturated fat, these #GoFaster Christmas Energy Bars provide an excellent compromise!

METHOD

- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas mark 4. Lightly grease a silicon bar tray (really worth investing in if you like your energy bars) or a 20cm sq baking tray.
- 2 Combine all the ingredients except the eggs in a large bowl.
- 3 In a separate bowl or cup, briefly beat the eggs with a fork, then mix with the fruit and nut mixture and stir until everything is coated with the egg.
- 4 Spoon equal amounts of the mixture into the bar tray, or pour the whole lot into the baking tray and

press down lightly to level off.

- 5 Bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes, until the cake is a deep, golden brown and slightly coming away from the sides of the tray. Remove and place the tray on a wire rack to cool. Cool in the baking tray. When cool, remove the individual bars or cut into squares with a sharp knife.

RF

Nutrition per bar Energy (kcal) 285 Protein (g) 5
Carbohydrate (g) 45 Fat (g) 10 Of which sugars (g) 31 Of which saturates (g) 1 Salt (g) trace Fibre (g) 6



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Kate Percy Athlete and cook, Kate is passionate about the link between good eating and better performance. Her bestselling books, *Go Faster Food* (£12.99), *Go Faster Food for Kids*, (£16.99), and *FuelSmart for Race Day* (£3.99) bring top sports nutrition advice to life with delicious recipes to help athletes fulfil their potential. They're available on amazon.co.uk, in bookstores, or get a signed copy from her website at gofasterfood.com



GEORGE F WINTER

RRIs and Economics

Running-related injuries can take a toll **ON YOUR POCKET** as well as your body. George looks at a Dutch study examining the economic burden of RRIs

There is no denying the popularity of running. For example, one 2008 study estimated that about 6% of the population of England runs at least once a week. A measure of

this popularity is the rise of organised running programmes which aim to increase the participation of novice, non-elite runners and to prevent, or reduce, running-related injuries (RRIs), which are proportionally higher among inexperienced runners.

Despite physical activity being associated with reduced mortality and disability, RRIs remain a potential downside of running, with possible outcomes including acute injury, chronic injury and even time off work. But what is the economic burden associated with RRIs?

This question was addressed by the authors of a Dutch study that investigated the 'Health and economic burden of running-related injuries in runners training for an event: A prospective cohort study.' The study took place following running clinics set up at the Tilburg Ten Miles (TTM) running events in Tilburg, the Netherlands, in 2014

53 runners (22 male, 31 female) participated in supervised training sessions lasting 1.5 hours from April 2014 to September 2014, and also undertook unsupervised training sessions. Runners completed online, in-depth questionnaires, which included providing details of RRIs, healthcare usage and time off work. There was an 18-week follow-up period



Adding up the costs of RRIs had some interesting results.

THE RESULTS SHOWED THAT:

- » The cumulative hours of running exposure were 1,215 (1,138 hours training, 77 hours racing) from a total of 1,204 running sessions
- » Each participant attended an average of two sessions per week
- » 32 participants reported 41 RRIs
- » The most commonly reported RRIs were Achilles tendon injury and knee pain, and a total of 35 overuse injuries (85.4%) was reported by 29 participants

AS FAR AS THE ECONOMIC BURDEN WAS CONCERNED:

- » There were 38 physio consultations, five medical specialist consultations and four GP consultations
- » There were 13 missing days from paid work
- » A total cost of £4,058 (based on €1 = 73p) was calculated for 32 RRIs reported by 25 participants during the 18-week follow-up period, with £2,704 due to indirect costs, such as absenteeism from work, and £1,304 due to direct costs such as healthcare consultations
- » The mean cost per RRI was £127
- » Overall and direct costs were significantly higher for males than females

Writing in the *Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports*, the authors note that theirs is the first report of the direct and indirect costs of RRIs among runners in an organised training programme. It is clear that the health benefits conferred by running, both on individuals and society, outweigh the economic burden of RRIs. However, the researchers point out that given the high popularity of running events and the high number of runners participating in organised training programmes, "Absolute societal costs of RRIs on the short term can be considered a matter of concern for public health; costs that can be prevented by implementing preventive advices [sic] and programs."

The fact that the indirect costs of RRIs through absenteeism were two-fold higher than the direct costs of seeking treatment supports the findings of other studies of the costs of sports injuries in other populations. It appears that the main contributor to the economic burden resulting from RRIs is not directly accessing healthcare professionals for treatment; rather it is lost productivity which delivers the main impact on society.

The results of this study represent a significant public health challenge, and one way that it might be usefully addressed would be to focus more resources on ways and means to prevent the development of RRIs – perhaps through running education programmes – among inexperienced runners, many of whom are males.



The health benefits conferred by running, both on individuals and society, outweigh the economic burden of RRIs

A keen long-distance runner and freelance writer, **George F Winter** is a Fellow of the Institute of Biomedical Science

Movement Break

Sitting comfortably? Staying **SEDENTARY** for too long can jeopardise your running form and increase injury risk. Follow our tips and try these simple exercises to stay strong and supple



In the UK, we spend an average of 9.5 hours per day sitting down. Time spent driving, commuting, sitting at a computer at work and in front of the TV all contribute towards what is becoming an epidemic sedentary lifestyle.

And just because you're a runner doesn't make you immune. Even if you run for an hour every day, if you spend the rest of it sitting down for lengthy periods, then you're still too sedentary. Sitting really is the new smoking as far as our health is concerned, and having the occasional (or even regular) run doesn't negate the bad effects, which can lead to diabetes, heart disease and cancer – all conditions linked to inactivity.

THE SOLUTION

Of course you can't change your job, but you can change your working day and include more movement and activity.

Enter the 'Movement Break'.

What you do during your working day can have a huge impact on not only your health, but your running form and injury risk – far more, in fact, than your choice of running shoe or technique.

Sneaking in a couple of conditioning exercises and stretches in the form of a 'Movement Break' will help to break up those lengthy periods of inactivity and interrupt your sedentary time. Even very short breaks of just one or two minutes can be enough to make a difference.

Anything will do: standing up, standing on one leg for a minute, stretching, walking up a flight of stairs to fetch a cup of tea or purposefully going through a range of conditioning exercises. So, jump up out of that chair and try these exercises whether you're at home, at work or on the train. Just keep moving – every little counts.



**Sitting is the new smoking
as far as health is concerned**

MOVEMENT BREAK EXERCISES

These exercises are great for all runners, and specifically those who spend a lot of time sitting down. Do them throughout the day, as you chat on the phone to a client, or you're sitting in a meeting, at a service station on the motorway or working at your computer. Take a regular break every 30 minutes and mix up these exercises so you do two to three of each of them every day.



BALL UNDER FOOT

WHY: Important for all runners, especially those who have calf or Achilles tightness.
HOW: Roll a golf ball or TP Therapy Massage Ball under the sole of your foot to release the fascia and any hot spots or tightness.
DO IT: 1-2 minutes on each foot, twice a day. Go gently and hunt out any hot spots.



HIP PRESS

WHY: Many runners are tight through the hip flexors. This exercise is an 'anti spasm' technique which encourages the muscles to relax and lengthen. It's very gentle and easy and can be done anywhere.
HOW: Sit on a chair and place your hands on your knee. Lift your foot off the floor and resist with your hands so your leg doesn't move. You'll feel some engagement in your hip.
DO IT: Hold this position – pressing up with your knee and down with your hands – for 20 seconds. Maintain a 25% effort level, don't push too hard. Repeat 4 times in a row and try to do it 3-4 times per day.



GLUTE SQUEEZE

WHY: The glutes are really important for runners, yet often neglected and weak. This exercise is easy to do and encourages the glutes to engage and re-connect. It's not a hard exercise, you should just feel your glutes waking up a little.
HOW: Stand on one leg with the other leg bent (knee at 90 degrees) and foot pressed out behind you. Push your foot towards the opposite wall and straighten your leg, just so you feel engagement in your glute muscle.
DO IT: Aim for 10-15 reps on each leg and repeat twice on each side. You should just feel the glute engage.



STAND ON ONE LEG

WHY: If you can't stand on one leg without wobbling then you need to work more on your proprioception and balance. This exercise also engages the glute medius muscle in the side of the hip – essential for runners.
HOW: Stand with feet hip distance apart. Slowly transfer your weight over to one leg and lift the other foot so it's just hovering off the floor. Avoid leaning over too much. You should feel some mild engagement in the side of your hip/bum muscle.
DO IT: Hold this position for a count of 10, then repeat 2-3 times. As you get stronger, build up the time – up to 30 seconds.



THORACIC ROTATIONS

WHY: Most runners and desk workers are stiff through the mid-back. This can affect your arm swing and running form.

HOW: Fix your pelvis still and clasp your hands together in front of you, heels of your hands together and arms straight. Rotate your ribcage until you feel the point of 'bind' in your mid-back/thoracic area – in that you can't go further, then rotate to the other side.

DO IT: Maintain a nice relaxed fluid movement, keeping your shoulders down. Aim for 20-30 reps twice per day.

3 TOP TIPS TO BE MORE ACTIVE



1 When working at your computer, factor in an 'Activity Break' every 30 minutes. Set a timer on your computer, get up and move around and try some of the exercises below/overleaf.

2 Instead of sitting slumped in front of the TV, get on the floor for some quality time with your foam roller and massage ball.

3 Encourage your colleagues to join you in a 'walking meeting' instead of sitting in a room. Record voice notes on your smartphone.



STAND ON ONE LEG AND LIFT

WHY: This is a progression of the 'stand on one leg' exercise. By lifting the opposite leg, you engage both sides of the hip and make everything work harder. This exercise is great for hip stability and glute med engagement.

HOW: Do the 'Stand on one leg' exercise, but then with the opposite leg, just lift it to the side slowly so you feel the hip muscles start working.

DO IT: Repeat this 10 times and repeat twice on each side. If you feel any pain in your knee or ITB, then bend the leg you're standing on just slightly and reduce the number of reps.

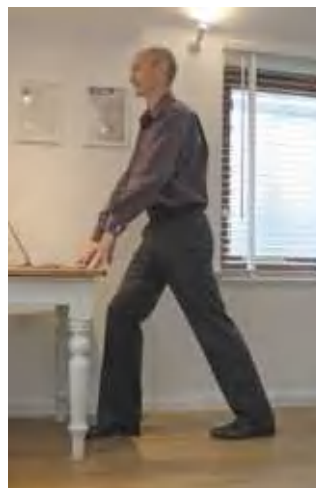


CHAIR SQUATS

WHY: This is a good mobiliser and will work the quads and glutes – both of these are important for runners. These will get you moving and up out of your chair.

HOW: Stand with your feet hip distance apart. Squat backwards – keeping your knees parallel over your toes – until your bum just touches your chair, then stand straight back up again.

DO IT: Repeat this exercise 10 times, building up to 20 reps. Try to do a couple of sets each day. Watch your form and focus on engaging your bum muscles, rather than your back.



CALF STRETCH

WHY: A simple stretch, but this one is done more 'actively' rather than a passive static hold. Many runners are tight through the calves. This is best done after using the ball under your foot.

HOW: Stand facing your desk holding on for balance. Bend your front knee and keep your back foot on the floor. Push your heel into the floor and press your hips forwards until you feel a stretch in your calf.

DO IT: This is a more 'active' stretch rather than a static stretch. Hold it for a count of 5-8 seconds, release it slightly and repeat the stretch again four times. By the fourth hold, you should feel the muscle relax.



HIP FLEXOR STRETCH

WHY: A simple stretch, but this one is done more 'actively' rather than a passive static hold. Many runners are tight through the hip flexors. This is best done after the hip press exercise.

HOW: Stand facing your desk in a split stance. Come up on your back toe and keep both legs straight. Simply tuck your pelvis under and press your pubic bone forwards until you feel a stretch through your hip.

DO IT: This is a more 'active' stretch rather than a static stretch. Hold it for 5-8 seconds, release it slightly and repeat the stretch again four times. By the fourth hold, you should feel the muscle relax.



LIVING WITH...

OSPREY REV HYDRATION PACK

Every month, we share our experience of **RUNNING TECH** and accessories and what it's like to train with them over time



Reviewed by Sarah Russell, Consultant Editor
Rev 1.5 used for

6 months

Rev 1.5, £60; Rev 6, £70

(the size relates to the volume capacity of the pack, NOT the reservoir size – both packs have a 1.5ltr liquid reservoir)

ospreyeurope.com

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

I'll be honest, when I first tried on the Osprey Rev 1.5 I wasn't initially impressed. It felt heavier than other packs I'd been using, it was unisex fit (which made me worry that it wouldn't fit properly) and I didn't like the colour. And despite being a huge fan of other Osprey packs, I didn't hold out much hope that it would win me over. I couldn't have been more wrong. I've now been using it for six months and it's become my 'go to' pack over more expensive and well-known brands... and, believe me, I'm a bit of a hoarder when it comes to hydration packs. I've run two ultras and two marathons with the Rev this year and it's proven itself to be 100% reliable with no leakage from the reservoir and not a hint of any chafing. It's the sort of pack that once you get going, you really do forget it's there.

HIGH PERFORMANCE PACK

There's no doubt that it's a little heavier (the Rev 1.5 weighs 0.34kg) but this has its pros and cons. There's a little more



In five words:
Value for money
Comfort
Quality

padding on the rear of the pack, which isn't a bad thing. I've used lighter less padded packs and found them uncomfortable after a while. Then there's the classic Osprey reservoir, where the coupling connectors on the drink tube, the cap and the heavier plastic adds a little weight. If you're familiar with the larger reservoir used in the hiking packs, then the one used in the Rev is like a mini version of the same. However, the more stable design means that as you drink and the reservoir becomes empty, it doesn't crumple in the bag, allowing you to access

every last drop. It's a quality design and built to last, unlike other more flimsy products. And on balance, I'd take the performance benefits over a little extra weight every time.

The magnetic bite valve is Osprey's iconic design feature loved by hikers Worldwide. It's a delight to drink from and easy to replace on the run, snapping back into place on the chest strap and staying there.

PERFECT FIT

The feature that stands out for me, however, is the actual fit of the pack. There are two sizes available: S/M and M/L. As a

size 10 woman, the S/M fits perfectly, whereas my 6ft husband needs the M/L. The 'BioStretch' body-wrap harness is what makes this pack stand out – it enables it to hug the body and fits like a glove. There is no movement when you run – thanks to the stabilisation wings – and the stretchy bungee chest straps enable a perfect fit, which can be adjusted as you drink and empty the pack. Other packs I've used bounce around, cause chafing or move. The Rev stays solid and in position for hours and hours of running.

AND IT'S WATERPROOF!

I've used many other packs over the years and always had to put valuables and my phone in a plastic bag inside to keep them dry. Not so with the Rev. Even in torrential rain it keeps everything dry inside.

EXTRAS

The bungee cords on the outside of the pack allow you to stash an extra layer and there is a sizeable zipped pocket for a map or first aid kit. There's an internal key clip too.

OTHER FEATURES

It would benefit from larger chest pockets to store additional bottles or more snacks. The 'DigiFlip' pocket for your smartphone, looks like a great idea, but I feel it's a bit of a gimmick and have never used it. My phone doesn't fit for a start.



FINAL VERDICT The Rev 1.5 is perfect for marathon running training and ultra races. It would easily work for a 30-50 mile run and is great for mountain biking too. The Rev 6 is larger and would be ideal for a longer multi-stage event where you need to carry more kit.

Transition to **TRAIL**

Nervous about trail running? With the right kit, gradual transition and **A BIT OF ADJUSTMENT**, you have absolutely nothing to fear

If the thought of running off-road makes you a bit anxious, you're not alone. The fear of twisted ankles or getting lost puts a lot of 'road runners' off heading for the trail. But there's a world of excitement and adventure just waiting on your doorstep.

WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT TRAIL RUNNING?

Ok, I know I'm biased, but trail running gets my vote over the road every time. For me it's about adventure, exploring, variety of terrain, mud, fun and nature. And – I'm whispering this quietly – I haven't had an injury in 18 months since I started running exclusively on the trail. I put that down to the way my body has to work in a completely different way. Every step and footstrike is different. My proprioception and balance is improved as I skip over logs, splash through muddy puddles and clamber over stiles. The repetitive nature of running on tarmac – where every step is the same – is eradicated entirely. My muscles are stronger, my body is more resilient and robust and my mind is completely chilled!

That's the 'psychological' side of trail running. There is nothing quite like being out on a crisp autumnal day, crunching through leaves on the forest floor, with a slight chill to the air, the smell of pine needles and the sound of silence. It feeds my soul on the deepest level.

Time and splits matter not a jot when you're out on the trail either. That means no pressure, so you can be 'in the moment' and appreciate your surroundings.

Compare that with running along a main road with cars whizzing past or hordes of runners trotting through a town? No thanks.

INJURY RISK

In the long term, the strength and resilience you develop on the trail can reduce 'typical' running injuries such as ITB, knee and hip problems. However the risk of tripping over a tree root or twisting your ankle is



Try to skip and hop over technical sections and be 'light of foot'

obviously much higher, especially in the beginning when you're adjusting to the varied terrain.

That's where proprioception, agility and balance become important. Just watch any fell race in the Lakes or Yorkshire and the runners seem to literally glide up and down the mountain, able to navigate rocks, boulders and tree roots with the grace and ease of a ballerina. But that doesn't happen overnight. Most of them will have been fell running since they were in nappies. You'll need a period of adjustment to allow your body to get used to the varied and technical terrain, to build up strength and improve your balance, agility and coordination.

TAKE YOUR TIME

The transition from 'road' to 'trail' can take some time; and much depends on the terrain you'll be running on. There's a world of difference between a flat gravelly 'fire

track' at your local forest – which isn't that much different to road – compared with a technical rocky footpath up the side of a mountain. 'Trail' really encompasses a wide range of terrains depending on where you live: grassy fields, boggy mud, rocks and boulders, gravel, sand, tree roots and rutted tracks. And most runners in the UK can experience most if not all of those underfoot conditions, during just one run.

HOW TO TRANSITION

Grab a copy of an OS map of your local area (or use the OS Map Finder app: ordnancesurvey.co.uk) and plot out a route including sections of off-road footpaths and road/pavement.

Include only short sections of trail to begin with (perhaps 25% of your overall run) and gradually add to it as you gain confidence and strength until eventually the balance tips in favour of more trail and less

WE ASKED: 'What do you love about trail running?' You said...



Guy Riddle, Glossop, Peak District
Most of my running is early, early morning (4:30am starts) so for me the trail running really

started when I got a decent head torch. Nothing better than heading up the trail in the dark entirely reliant on a torch, then watching the world wake up around you as daylight breaks. Especially if you happen to get somewhere high up in the hills as the sun rises.

Stuart Smith, Tunbridge Wells
I love that 10 minutes running from your office can lead you to woodland or open grassland and all your worries and stresses get left behind. You don't need expensive kit; a simple t-shirt and some cheap shoes will do just fine. You're running on soft ground and getting covered in mud, you don't need shoe technology! I love the feeling when you've been running through heavy woodland and come out to a stunning view. Especially when you're probably the first person to see it that day.



Luan Wall, Stourport on Severn, in Worcestershire
I love the change of focus. After more than a decade of road running

up to and including marathon distance, I felt burned out and totally out of love with running. Then, almost as a farewell to the sport, I went and ran the Jurassic Coast Challenge and it swept me off my feet! I loved the 'running by feel' and stopping to take in the views without worrying about

road... and ultimately no road at all!

WATCH YOUR FEET

Go carefully over really tricky terrain and focus on picking up your feet as you navigate rocks and tree roots. Try to skip and hop over technical sections and be 'light of foot'. You'll need to concentrate more and you may find you're more tired afterwards too. Initially you might find it really tricky but persevere and you'll soon adjust. 'The more you train on trails,' explains Graeme Hilditch (author of *Trail Running from Start to Finish*) 'the more you teach your brain, nerves and legs how to react, your body learns how to adapt'.

Tim Lloyd – manager of the Salomon Trail Running Team (salomon.com) has this advice: 'Small changes to your running technique will be a big help. The challenges of the terrain are absorbed by a relaxed body – minimising impact, effort and risk of collision – so stay as relaxed as possible. Shorten your stride to maintain your centre of gravity and lift your legs slightly higher. This is particularly important when doing hill work. And aid your balance by keeping your arms slightly out at the sides, but keep shoulders and hands relaxed'.

GET LOST

Treat your trail run as an adventure. You might get lost, but you'll soon find your way back so long as you have a map or an app. Use it as an opportunity to explore your local area and to find new routes and paths you probably didn't know existed! (some GPS watches such as the Suunto Ambit 3 offer a 'breadcrumb' track which will take you back the way you came if you do get lost).

WHAT ABOUT PACE?

You cannot compare your pace on the road to that on the trail – and nor should you try! It will be far slower – possibly two minutes per mile or more. So switch off your GPS, relax and just focus on effort and time, rather than min/mile pace. Tim

Lloyd agrees 'Trail running is about quality not quantity. You need a different rationale when you're trail running. It's not about PBs and miles covered but more about time spent on your feet. The distance you're able to cover will be dictated by the terrain, so miles are less important than time.'

GET FITTER AND STRONGER

Yes we might be biased, but we believe trail running provides a much more rounded training experience than just running on the roads, in terms of not only conditions underfoot, but also hills and natural variety of pace. 'Interval Training is a natural by-product of trail running' explains Lloyd 'The terrain dictates the intensity you work at on different sections. This varying of speed and effort improves your strength and endurance by increasing your lactic acid threshold'.

To prepare for the challenges of trail running, you need to do some specific conditioning exercises as well. Most runners aren't conditioned for the trail, even if they've been road running for years, so some specific training will be vital.

'Off-road conditioning should play a major part in improving your stability and agility on the trails,' explains Hilditch 'Performing a series of specific exercises – such as squats, lunges, hops and drills – will help maximise your running enjoyment and keep you injury-free for many years to come.'

These exercises are explained in *Trail Running – From Start to Finish* by Graeme Hilditch, published by Bloomsbury.

GET KITTED OUT

Trail running is like a taking up a whole new sport as far as kit is concerned! And it's a great excuse to indulge in some 'off-road specific' running gear.

'Footwear is the most important consideration' explains Lloyd. 'Trail shoes differ [from] road shoes as they focus more on traction, agility and protection rather

STAY SAFE

» **Always take a phone with you in case you need to call for help or you get lost, especially if you're running alone or in a remote area.**

» Run with a backpack. You can take a drink, extra jacket, food and a map. There's nothing worse than getting lost and being out for hours without provisions or warm clothes.

» **A small first aid kit in your back pack is a great idea. Blister plasters, a small crepe bandage, silver survival blanket and an eye wash are all useful items. It's always better to be prepared!**

» Always take a map (or a section of the map) or the OS map app on your phone.

» **Tell someone where you're running and when you're likely to be back.**

than on cushioning and stride. If you're planning on doing a lot of winter running in the mud, look for something with deeper lugs and grip like the Salomon Speedcross3 or Fellraiser'.

Next to shoes, the second most important 'trail-specific' item is socks. Merino wool socks are best for trail running as they dry quickly and are less likely to cause blisters. We love Darn Tough socks (darn tough.com); or if it's very wet and muddy, try waterproof socks such as DexShell (dexshell.co.uk).

A running-specific hydration back pack is also a good idea and allows you to carry all your kit, fluid and food on the move. Check out our review of the Osprey Rev on page 32. Or try the new Camelbak Ultra 4 – a 2-litre pack designed for trail and ultra running.

Other items you might need include a waterproof jacket, a buff, gloves, hat and head torch. Trail running kit tends to be more 'subtle' in styling as well, you don't need to be hi-vis out on the trail, so go for more muted colours and natural fabrics.



it affecting my splits. I now run mostly trail marathons and ultra marathons and am totally back in love with the sport



Kassia Gardner Milton Keynes

I haven't completely transitioned from roads to trails as I still run road half marathons and

marathons, but as a road runner I would get too focused on splits, minutes per mile pace, etc. Running on the trails is a lot more mentally refreshing, physically

challenging and above all, enjoyable! Isn't that what running should be about?

Tina Milledge, Chatham Kent

Love the lack of people/vehicle noise, love the noise in the trees, love the crunch and crack of leaves, twigs and gravel that matches my pace. Love surprising squirrels. Love clambering over styles and throwing my arms up to avoid nettles!

Scott Smith, Essex

I love the silence, the attention it requires as you need to pay attention to the terrain.

Pick your path. It's the fact that you can switch off surrounded by nature. And trail running at night! Wow, ultimate. You can only see as far ahead of you as the head torch allows. It gives you a sense of isolation, allowing you to feel like the last person on earth. Oh and obviously the mud



Caroline Lee, Cotswolds

Buy an OS map and off you go, how to discover an area, enjoy the views and have a great run with friends. Living near

The Cotswold Way it would have been rude not to have run it this summer; a great experience and you just keep plodding along. Walk the hills and fly down them, so much more fun. Embrace the mud in the winter and enjoy the change of harder trails in the summer. Always different. Harness your dog up and enjoy canicross and exercise your pooch at the same time.

Our Editor, Amy, tried off-road running for the first time in Cornwall this month – turn the page to find out how she got on.

GO WEST

RF editor Amy takes to the **CORNISH COAST** in her first foray into off-road running

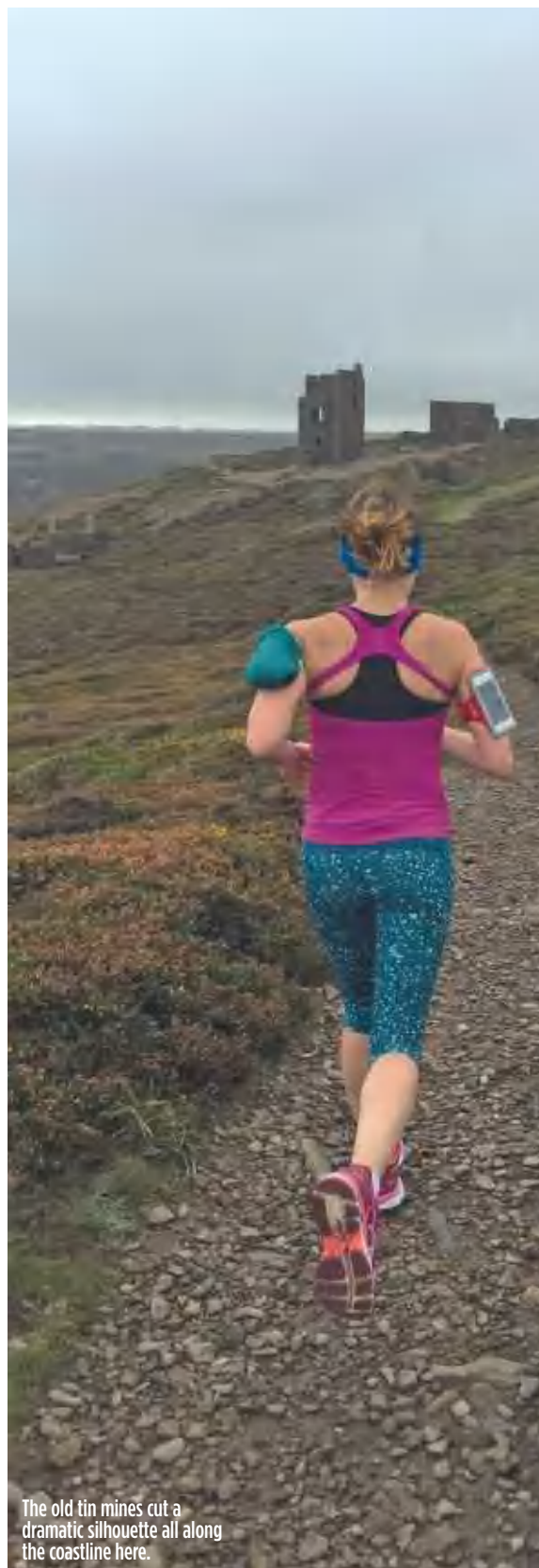
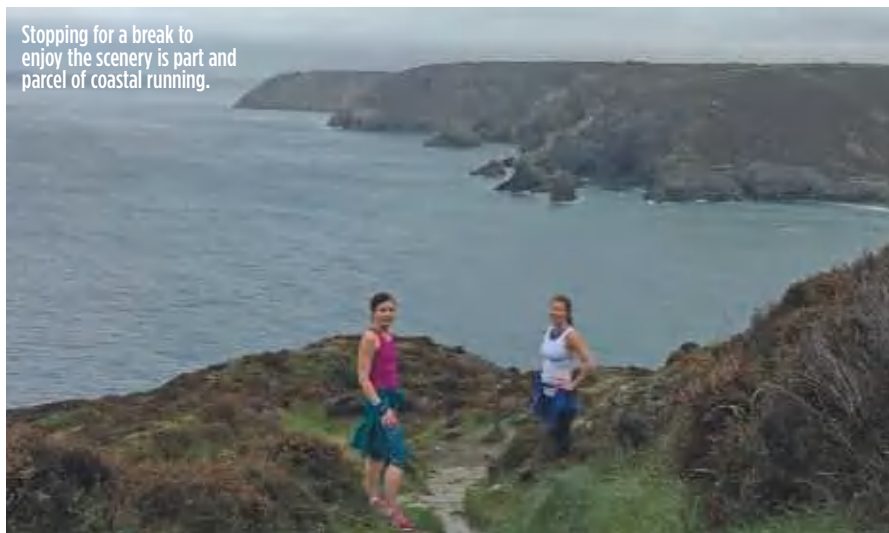
I am a Londoner. I've lived there more than ten years, know it like the back of my hand and wouldn't want to live anywhere else. But I'm also a runner, which can present its problems in the city as I loop my local park for the tenth time, trying to get my kms up before a big race. Joining a club has broadened my horizons as I've learnt routes that take in a few different parks at a time, but the fact remains that road running in the capital is unavoidable, exposing me to noise and pollution with every outing. So when I stepped off the plane in Cornwall, I felt like I was a world away. My destination was a beautiful converted school house in St Agnes; when I go on a running break, I always try to find a self-catering property to stay in, which just gives me that bit more

control over my diet and makes me feel more settled and less like I'm 'away'. My guide for the trip was Helen Clare, a local yoga and running coach, who arrived the following morning, straight from a yoga retreat she had been hosting, to take me on a gentle route along the coast.

LOCAL ROUTES

Helen clearly loves this part of the world and enthuses, "Cornwall is absolutely ideal for trail running as we have miles and miles of coastal path all around us. It is easy to access and you can literally run round around the whole of the Cornish coastline! The terrain is varied and the scenery is stunning." And she's not wrong. As we pick our way along the rocky paths, we can see for miles – ever the tour guide, Helen could

Stopping for a break to enjoy the scenery is part and parcel of coastal running.



The old tin mines cut a dramatic silhouette all along the coastline here.

HELEN'S TOP TIPS FOR CORNISH COASTAL RUNNING

1 WEAR APPROPRIATE OFF-ROAD RUNNING SHOES that are suitable for the coastal path, which can be muddy and rocky.

2 THE COASTAL PATH WEBSITE IS A GREAT RESOURCE – use it to

help you decide on your route, as it will give you the distance between towns and beaches.

3 THE CORNISH COAST PATH CAN GET FAIRLY BUSY in summer and over holidays, but if you get up and go out early in the morning

it mostly remains clear just for you. You might see some beautiful skies, too.

4 YOGA IS MASSIVELY BENEFICIAL FOR RUNNERS POST-RUN When trail running you are using more muscles, especially

in your feet and legs, than you would road running. Release the built up tension with some yoga after your run.

5 IF YOU ARE USED TO ROAD RUNNING try going out without your watch! You will run much

more slowly because of the type of terrain, undulations and purely from taking in the scenery. This is one of the pleasures of trail running. Enjoy it without concerning yourself with pace.

See next month for Helen's top yoga for runners' poses



It can be mentally tiring too, as you concentrate so hard on where you're stepping.



name every alcove and beach in sight and even chatted a bit about the history of the area, unavoidable really, as the coastline is littered with old closed-down tin mines.

As a road runner, the coast was a big change for me. For a start, my shoes weren't good enough (I've since invested in some proper trail shoes) and every rock I didn't manage to avoid gave me a good prod. Secondly, I had to keep stopping. This goes completely against my nature; I'm used to running steadily, consistently and at a good pace, but if you want to stay upright as well as take in the views, the only safe way to do it is to slow down or stop altogether. Initially I found this odd and frustrating and kept apologising for holding Helen up, but after a while I realised that this is just part of it, part of the enjoyment and, basically, I just needed to chill out. Helen explains, "Yes, road runners are so used to running at a consistent pace it can seem hard to get into a rhythm at first."

CALMER COUNTRYSIDE

Another thing I noticed was that I was leaving Helen quite far behind quite often, which is apparently typical of city-types, who are often conditioned to rate their run by pace, rather than enjoyment. Helen says, "I think coastal running is all about running for the love of it and enjoying the surroundings and the variety of terrain under foot, which is why I suggest leaving the Garmin at home!"

The following day (with my arms aching, oddly, from holding them up, trying to

balance the day before) we took a right at the start of the trail, heading in the opposite direction to the day before. This was a completely different proposition, with very steep inclines and very rocky places. The terrain was much trickier and more bleak-looking, the cliffs were steeper and we even happened upon a raven to add to the moody atmosphere. Again, I stumbled and stopped all the way along, but by now I knew it was the norm and didn't have that stressed, guilty feeling every time. At the end I was, once more, exhausted, but exhilarated. Since this trip I've also been off-road running in Tenerife where a fellow runner quipped 'it's not trail running, it's fast hiking,' and I couldn't agree more. It's an entirely different way of running, and I think I like it.

RF

St Agnes

Amy stayed at the Old School House (below) in beautiful St Agnes, which sleeps up to eight people and costs from £461 for three nights, depending on the season. Find out more here: beachretreats.co.uk

While you're there, sample the Sunday lunch at Taste, tastestagnes.co.uk (the cauliflower cheese is amazing!).



The coastline goes for miles so you need to be mindful of when to turn back.

DON'T JUST BE SEEN

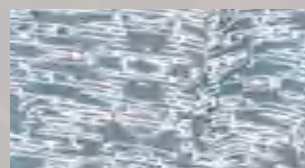
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KINESIOLOGY TAPE: **What you** **need to know**

Rocktape UK's medical director **PAUL COKER** gives us the lowdown on the next big thing for runners and athletes

Few people can have failed to notice the rise of this sometimes brightly coloured tape in recent years. Whether on Gareth Bale's legs, Andy Murray's knee, or most-recently a plaster of players in the Rugby world cup, it's been rapidly gaining popularity with athletes and therapists alike. While some people believe that it is nothing more than a passing fad, others, myself included, have seen and felt its powerful effects in reducing pain and enhancing performance. Every day in my clinics I see patients delighted and amazed by the effects of tape. Every time I teach a taping course I see sceptics become converts by wearing and feeling the tape work on them.

Kinesiology Tape (which is the generic unbranded term for stretchy tapes like Rocktape) can be used to complement and augment the work of a wide variety of health professionals from strength and conditioning coaches to chiropractors and everything in between. Or athletes self-treating their own niggles. If reducing pain and improving movement is what you are after, join the 'taping revolution' and prepare to be amazed.

WHERE'S THE PROOF?

The popularity of Kinesiology Taping has grown and spread worldwide based on its clinical effectiveness to reduce pain and enhance performance rather than hard



The tape is fully waterproof and will stay put for days.

Although still in its infancy, the early signs from research studies are encouraging

tangible evidence about how the effects are achieved.

Although still in its infancy, the early signs from research studies are encouraging and a body of academic research is growing to support the positive effects of tape.

RECENT STUDIES HAVE SHOWN KINESIOLOGY TAPING TO...

Reduce pain and alter movement patterns in people with anterior knee pain.

Alter dynamic foot posture in people with shin splints.

Increase lower back flexibility in healthy people.

Speed up recovery from acute lower back pain.

Some studies, mostly on healthy subjects, have had negative findings. Most experienced tapers agree that tape will do

little to healthy tissue but frequently helps wherever there is compromise, so these findings come as no surprise.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Cards on the table, while the clinical effects are clear to see by anyone who applies or wears tape, nobody is 100% sure how it works. This is my best guess until more research comes along.

MECHANICAL/SUPPORTING EFFECT

The tape has longitudinal stretch properties of about 180%.

These stretch properties are similar to those of your skin, muscle and connective tissue.

This helps the body's active stabilisation system by adding a little extra stability, spring and awareness of stretch to muscles, ligaments and joint.

SKIN WRINKLING/LIFTING EFFECT

The elastic property of the tape is thought to induce vertical lift of skin from the underlying tissue. This decompresses the

WHAT IS IT?..

Kinesiology tape is made of tightly woven elasticated cotton fibres.

The glue on the tape is acrylic, highly durable and waterproof so tape can be worn for up to a week withstanding vigorous movement, sweat and total emersion in water.

The aim is that tape matches and augments the stretch characteristics of your skin and muscles.

WHAT IT'S NOT...

- » The tape does not contain any medication or drugs.
- » All the benefits come from the tape's elasticity.
- » Different colours are cosmetic only, all tape has the same benefits.

WHAT WILL IT DO?

Kinesiology tape can be used to:

- » Reduce pain
- » Improve movement and posture
- » Drain swelling
- » Aid healing
- » Facilitate early return to activity or sport
- » Improve sporting performance.



WHO CAN USE IT?

- » Kinesiology tape can be worn by anyone from children to the elderly.
- » It can help to treat almost any pain or dysfunction being caused by the body's musculo-skeletal system.
- » It works best at the milder end of the injury spectrum, especially for those who only get pain

with activity or exercise.

- » Although the glue is tough and durable, the tape can be removed with very little discomfort and leaves no residue on the skin.
- » The glue is acrylic so contains no latex and can be used by those allergic to most other tapes.
- » In all but the hairiest places the tape will still stick well and leave the hair behind when you take it off so shaving is rarely required.

capillary bed and subcutaneous space.

The decompression may promote improved blood and lymphatic flow in the taped area. This allows the removal of injury waste products and pain generating chemicals, promoting healing.

NEUROLOGICAL EFFECT

Wherever tape is placed it changes and increases neural input from receptors in the skin and underlying tissue. This extra input is thought to interfere with and dampen pain.

By increasing neural input from the taped area, conscious and subconscious awareness is increased.

Tape placed over weak, sore and injured tissue will act to aid the body's 'active' stabilisation system, improving and increasing activity and feedback from nerves and muscles. This results in

improved functional performance, less pain, and faster recovery.

ANY DRAWBACKS?

Very occasionally it can cause an allergic skin reaction but much less often than more traditional tapes.

If too much tension is placed on the ends of the tape it can irritate and inflame the skin.

Absolute contraindications are open wounds or active infection/cellulitis.

Precautions include cancer patients, DVT, history of skin allergies, fragile skin. If in doubt check with a doctor or medic.

It's not a miracle cure! It won't mend broken bones or instantly fix serious injury.

It doesn't work like a plaster on a wound.

To get maximum effect the right combination of tape and tissue stretch is vital.

COMMON TAPE APPLICATIONS FOR RUNNERS



ITB/OUTER KNEE

YOU WILL NEED

- » Long strip: length of thigh.
- » Short strip: Approx 1/3 of long strip

TO APPLY Stand with the leg crossed behind other leg and foot rolled in. Maintain this stretch position throughout the application. Apply one end of the long strip of tape with no stretch just below the sore spot on the outside of the knee, lay the tape (with backing paper off) stretching directly over the ITB on the outside of thigh (above).

Short strip: Tear the backing paper in the centre of the tape, peel it back to expose the middle half of tape and stretch it 75%. Lay this directly over the sorest spot and lay each end down with no stretch. Rub the entire application all over to activate the glue and ensure a good stick



ACHILLES TENDON

YOU WILL NEED

- » 1 Strip of tape long enough to go under heel and up both sides of the calf.

TO APPLY Apply the middle of tape first just in front of heel. Pull toes and foot up toward knee to stretch calf muscle (above).

Apply tape with 25-50% stretch diagonally over Achilles tendon.

Apply rest of strip with backing paper off stretched over the muscle on opposite side to start point. Repeat with second half of strip.

Remember to apply the ends of tape with 0% stretch and rub all over tape to activate the glue. The tape should cross over the point of maximum pain.

For more information go to rocktape.net where you can some great how-to video clips and buy a roll or two of kinesiology tape



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For those who listen to music or podcasts on long runs, this is the ideal stocking filler. This flexible armband is super-comfortable and even has a little place to keep your door key. Available in a range of colours and sizes to suit most mobile phones. casehut.com



DHB BLOK ARM WARMERS £18

Easy to put on and peel off once you are warm. Made from soft, bi-elastic micro brushed jersey for extra warmth. Bright colours, his and hers. wiggle.co.uk



KAESO PEPPERMINT RAIN NON-FOAMING FOOT SOAK £8.99

Every runner experiences blisters and sore feet at some point. This deliciously soft soak will be a welcome relief after tough running. amazon.co.uk



STOCKING FILLERS



REEBOK RUNNING HEADBAND £12.99

High-vis, so great for dark mornings and nights, this headband is also reversible to be plain black. Double layer fabric and clever contouring will keep ears warm in winter training. reebokfitness.info



NATHAN WRIST RUNNER 2 £12.99

Tuck your essentials safely away with this on-the-run storage pocket. Can hold cash, keys, cards. Hi-vis fabric, bright yellow, pink or blue. nathansports.com



FEETURES ANKLE SOCKS £11.99

Incredibly soft, warm and light, Feetures running socks are like a second skin. A blend of merino wool and rayon bamboo, they'll keep your feet and toes well-protected and comfortable, and suit any shoe. A must for runners!



ZINGO BOTTLE £11.99

This clever sports bottle has a built-in citrus juicer in the bottom – turn upside down and unscrew the bottom, push a lemon, lime or orange into the juicer, then screw back up. Fill from the top with water and hey presto, a cleansing workout drink! johnlewis.com

ODO SPORTS PACK £23.95

This cleaning agent works wonders on new/old kit – it completely sanitises it, removes odours and restores technical features to their original state. The perfect gift for practical runners! Buy the entire range for £23.95 or individual products – see website for details. odosport.com





AQUAPAC 'PLUS' ARMBAND CASE **£35**

Ideal for those long marathon runs. This 100% waterproof armband case will keep your phone dry when you run. Different sizes available to fit all phones.

aquapac.net



REEBOK RUNNING SKULLCAP **£19.99**

For really cold weather, a full cap is required and this reversible design from Reebok is ideal. Double-layered fabric keeps out the cold and the one-size-fits-all design makes it an easy buy for any runner.

reebokfitness.info



21 OZ HYDRO FLASK **£24.99**

This robust and versatile stainless steel flask keeps your drink cold for up to 24 hours or your hot drink steaming for six hours. Fab range of colours, but we love this festive red.

hydroflask.com



NATHAN ZEPHYR FIRE 100 HAND TORCH **£44.99**

A running-specific flashlight designed to sit snugly in your hand/on your wrist (so you don't need to hold it). Hand strap is adjustable and there's a loud safety siren to use if help is needed.

nathansports.com



UNDER
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GORE ESSENTIAL WINDSTOPPER SOFTSHELL GLOVES **£34.99**

These gloves are ideal for both running and cycling, offering warmth and protection from the elements. Thermo stretch makes them super comfy too.

goreapparel.com



CEP RUN MERINO SOCKS **£39.99**

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cepsports.co.uk



ODLO ALESUND BEANIE **£40**

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odlo.com



DHB TRIPLE LENS SUNGLASSES **£19.99**

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wiggles.co.uk

REEBOK RUNNING HEADLIGHT AND REAR LIGHT

£29.99

Even in towns and cities there are badly lit areas. This bright head torch will ensure you don't trip over hidden hazards. Has bright, dim and flashing settings and has a rear, red light too.

reebokfitness.info





FITBIT SURGE £199 - £249

This popular all-in-one activity tracker comes with built-in GPS, continuous HR monitor, multi-sport data options, seven-day battery life, altimeter, light sensor, digital compass and more!
fitbit.com



LIJA BLAZE WINTER JACKET £100

Designed with air vents and crisscross detail on the back, the Blaze is ultra light and breathable. Will give you confidence and comfort on your next run. Look good, run well!
lijastyle.com



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camelbak.com



OSPREY TALON 44 BACKPACK £100

This award winning multi-use backpack can be used for hiking, running, commuting or cycling. Super lightweight, comfortable, waterproof and loaded with features. It will probably last forever.
ospreyeurope.com



UNDER
£200



YURBUDS VENTURE PRO EARPHONES £79.99

You can't go wrong with Yurbuds. The clever rubbery design means they'll never fall out and the magnet system will keep the cable tangle free. Also has an Apple-phone-compatible microphone.
uk.jbl.com



KEEN HOODOO 3 BOOTS £135

These fully insulated, snug and super comfy walking boots will keep your feet toasty and dry on winter walks. With a thermal footbed and new improved high-grip sole, you won't want to take them off!
keenfootwear.com



OSPREY OZONE CONVERTIBLE £200

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ospreyeurope.com



BROOKS WOMEN'S LSD LITE JACKET, £70

This ultra-light jacket is perfect for those days when it looks like rain. It easily folds into its own pocket and has an elastic strap so you can wear it on your arm just in case the weather turns.
brooksrunning.com/en

SUGOI ZAP RUN JACKET AND VEST, FROM £80

These stylish winter tops have crushed glass technology so they look good in the day and reflect light at nighttime – trust us, they're bright!
Available for men and women in black or blue-grey.
international.sugoi.com/gbr/find-retailer





SUUNTO AMBIT3 PEAK SAPPHIRE / HR AND GPS £500

This top of the range GPS watch for serious adventurers and athletes is packed with functions including route navigation, altimeter, GPS, heartrate and Bluetooth.

suunto.com

ELLIPTIGO 3C £1599

This crazy-looking machine is a cross between a bike and cross-trainer. Ride it outside for a low-impact work-out, ideal for those with injuries.

elliptigo.co.uk



TOMTOM BANDIT ACTION CAMERA £299.99

Create a great movie of your run and share it within moments of the action. The Bandit's motion and GPS sensors automatically find and tag the best moments based on speed, altitude, G-force, acceleration and heart rate.

tomtom.com



BLOW THE BUDGET



REEBOK ZR10 TREADMILL £1199.99

A great idea if you have space, this easy-to-use treadmill gives runners a second option if they just can't get outside, or just want to do some measured interval training.

argos.co.uk



13 INCLINE GAMMA MOUNTAIN BIKE, £999.99

Mountain bikes are great for cross training and this one is built to take on anything you throw at it! We like the flashes of colour and the heavy duty wheels.

halfords.com



GARMIN FENIX 3 £469.99

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garmin.com

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BUNGYPUMP is the unique concept aiming to improve functional fitness through multidimensional training with poles with built in suspension of resistance from **4 to 10kg** – to suit different levels of fitness and purposes.

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- Full body workout promoting a good healthy posture, great for back problems, breathing, digestion and much more. 90% skeletal muscles are involved whilst just walking with the correct technique! There are over 100 strengthening, posture correcting, balance, stretching exercises making BungyPump the most versatile in and outdoor fitness tool! Visit our website for demonstration videos.
- VO2 Max increased by up to 77% (in comparison to ordinary walking *modo academy testing and 34% use of rigid poles) BungyPump does more in less time making it easy to introduce into a busy lifestyle.
- BungyPump's are used in prevention of injury and post-op rehab. Our Bungypump's are prized by medical professionals – See our physiotherapists report online
- An all year round activity used by cyclists and runners in their functional training, rebalancing the body musculature and conditioning the whole body.
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- In comparison to running – heart rate level while using BungyPump could be similar or even higher (as you recruit more body musculature in greater range and multi-plane movement patters) as arms swing from the shoulders causes the length of the stride to be greater – not only does this make you work harder, move faster but also poles will propel you forward working both hip and shoulder rim muscles more effectively as well as those underactive glutes and upper back muscles so important for the posture! (All with the correct technique)

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Take the **REGRET TEST**

How quickly do you **MOVE ON** from a bad race? Answer this quick quiz to discover if you are a 'maximiser' or a 'satisficer'

Last month, our experts offered pros and cons of choosing to DNS or DNF – a decision many of us have faced. For some, a bad race leads to deep-rooted regret, while others simply draw a line under the race and move on. What makes us react differently?

Determined to find out, social psychologists in the US studied how regret influences behaviour and discovered that while regret is a negative emotion and can be difficult to process (attention those who wallow!), it can also motivate you to take positive action – it all depends on who you are.

HOW REGRETFUL ARE YOU? TAKE OUR TEST TO FIND OUT!

Schwartz et al (2002) developed the following test to see how regret influences behaviour. Answer each question on a scale of 1 to 7 (1 = completely disagree; 7 = completely agree):

1 Whenever I make a choice, I'm curious about what would have happened if I'd chosen differently.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2 Whenever I make a choice, I try to get information about how other alternatives turned out.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3 If I make a choice and it turns out well, I still feel that I failed if I learn that another choice would have turned out better.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4 When I think about how I'm doing in life, I often assess opportunities I have passed up.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5 Once I make a decision, I don't look back.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Add up your scores for the first 4 questions then subtract your score for question number 5 from that total. If you score 13 or below, and you are likely to be a satisficer (strange word, I know, but bear with me!); score 13 or above, you're likely to be a maximiser (see box).

Maximisers have a tendency to be more regretful than satisficers, hence the higher your total score (closer to 27) the more regretful you are likely to be.

MAXIMISERS Maximisers focus on making the best possible choice, doing their homework and having high standards. Their downfall is that they are also more sensitive to social comparisons (than satisficers) and, like perfectionists, are less likely to be happy with their choices and more likely to feel regret, no matter how well their choices turn out.

CON: When it comes to having a bad race, maximisers tend to agonise over what went wrong, constantly thinking back over the race. Looking back rather than ahead could lead to slow progress.

PRO: Their analytical personality means that if they are self-aware, they have the ability to turn their regret into positive action, learning from mistakes and turning their next race into a positive experience.

SATISFICERS Satisficers are content with choices that were good enough at the time, even if they later found out they had missed a better choice. Overall, they aren't driven by potential regret and are less likely to feel regretful.

CON: Satisficers need to be careful not to be too blasé, so that they too can learn from a bad race, and take positive action to ensure they cross the line of their next race with a smile.

PRO: Satisficers often have the ability to quickly draw a line under a bad race and move on, and focus on their next target without losing confidence.



Go mental to run your best

Boost brainpower and sharpen your running with three key mental training techniques. Follow our **STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE** and learn how to be your best without even opening your eyes

WORDS Evie Serventi

BODY CENTRING

BEST FOR: FINE-TUNING YOUR FOCUS

If you do yoga, Pilates, regularly meditate or 'pause' during the day to close your eyes and take deep breaths, you're probably centring without realising it. Developed by sports psychologist Robert Nideffer in the 1970s to help athletes focus and concentrate during their game (mainly tennis/baseball players who take frequent breaks in the action), centring involves focusing attention on the centre of your body, just behind your navel (some describe it as a heavy feeling in the pit of their stomach).

HOW IT WORKS:

You are centred when your body weight is distributed about the centre of your body in a way that feels comfortable – it's then that your body seems to communicate that it is primed and ready to perform. Next time you are watching your favourite sport, take notice of athletes as they prepare at the start line – you'll often see them centring. It's a valuable skill to have to avoid distractions at crowded or loud events, or when you have lots on your

mind. Here's how to do it:

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your arms hanging loosely by your sides.

Close your eyes and breathe evenly, in through your nose and out gently through your mouth.

Inhale deeply from your abdomen and as you do, be aware of the tension in your face, neck, shoulders and chest. As you exhale, let the tension fall away and focus on the feeling of heaviness in your abdomen.

Continue to breathe evenly, focusing all of your attention internally on the area behind your navel.

Maintain your attention on that spot and breathe normally, feeling very controlled, relaxed and calm.

On each out-breath use a trigger word that captures the physical feelings and mental focus that you want.

Try: strong, calm, sharp, loose, light.

Use your word every time you practise centring.

CENTRING – TRY IT:

Before each run (especially beginners). Before an intense training/hill session.

En route to your next race (if you are a passenger in a car or travelling on public transport).

When planning your next event/upcoming season (it helps keep a clear perspective on goals).





**You'll often see
athletes centring
as they prepare at
the start line**



VISUALISATION

BEST FOR: BOOSTING CONFIDENCE AND PERFORMANCE

Most people are familiar with this term, but truly effective visualisation is a skill, and involves a whole lot more than simply daydreaming. And while you might be confident you can tell the difference between events that happen in reality and those that you imagine, the distinction is less obvious than you might think: messages sent in the form of neural impulses to and from the brain during imagined activity closely resemble messages sent during actual physical activity.

HOW IT WORKS:

When you visualise yourself running in a race, for example, electromagnetic activity occurs in the relevant muscle groups, similar to what would occur during your actual run. It's the body's way of 'priming' the relevant muscles you'll be using before you head out for your run. In other words, physical skills (running) have the potential to improve even when they are only practised in the mind! This doesn't mean, however, that you can sit and dream about running in a 10k race then expect to go out and run a PB. Visualisation doesn't replace physical training; it's most effective when included as part of your training plan.

IDENTIFY YOUR SENSES:

The idea is to identify those senses you'll find easier

to include in your visualisations. Work through the following list, visualising each one. Make notes on which senses seem to resonate more. Can you see movement in your images? Can you visualise colour? Can you hear sounds?

Note: some sense statements are general, some are running-specific – either way, once you know that you can best visualise smells and sounds, for example, you can start to develop visualisations that will work effectively for you:

SOUND

The crash of a plate as it hits the ground
The plop of a pebble dropped into a stream
The noise of a crowd, roadside at a city marathon
The sound of the horn at the start of a race

FEEL

The exfoliating, sinking feel of walking barefoot along a sandy beach
The dimpled skin of an orange
The crisp feel of your race number as you pin it to your top
The cold, hard feel of the engraved finishing medal post-race

SMELL

The aroma of freshly ground coffee
The smell of chlorine as you enter an indoor pool
The newness of trainers, freshly taken out of the box

VISUALISATION TIPS

1 RELAX – you need to be calm and have full concentration

2 SET THE SCENE – decide which visual scenario you want to use (early morning run, group run, a race)

3 FOCUS ON THE SENSES that most resonated (above) – so if sight and smell worked best for you, focus on these during your visualisation

4 KEEP IT POSITIVE – visualise yourself in a positive light when running. Include wobbly moments such as shoelaces coming undone, or feeling really fatigued, then see yourself working through each situation and running on strong

5 REPEAT THE PROCESS – the more you practise these techniques, the easier and more natural it will feel to visualise, and visualise successfully. Good luck!

HOW DO YOU FOCUS ON A RACE?

Share your techniques and stories @runfitmag and facebook.com/runningfitness



Concentrating on your own prep will help stop you being distracted by others.

The smell of oils in the massage tent at an event

TASTE

The sweetness of honey
The sharpness of grapefruit
The refreshing taste of fruit post-race (and you are starving!)
The cool, soothing taste of a smoothie after a long run

SIGHT

A sunset in one of your favourite locations
Watching a competition of your favourite sport
Seeing yourself running through the finish line of a race, arms up
Watching a group of running buddies running towards you

Now try using the senses that most resonate to create running-specific images. Start with something simple, then build on it. For example: you are putting your trainers on (FEEL), heading out as the sun is rising (SIGHT), the world is still sleeping (SOUND), you breathe in the cool dewy air as you get into a rhythm (TASTE) ... and so on.

VISUALISATION – TRY IT:

During long training runs.
Just before sleeping.
During races when the going gets tough.
On the way to your next race.

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION (PMR)

BEST FOR: CALMING NERVES, LOWERING ANXIETY

PMR is a very specific exercise developed by US physician Dr Edmund Jacobson back in the 1930s to help patients deal with anxiety. If practised regularly, PMR can really help you control your body's anxiety levels, hence it's a very useful technique for those who have dispositional tendencies to worry or be nervous, or for those who suffer with bad nerves on race day.

HOW IT WORKS:

The idea is to progressively 'tense and relax' each muscle group in your body, learning to differentiate between relaxed and tense muscles as you alternate between the two states. You become more switched on in terms of recognising when and where tension is present in your body, which leads to being able to control your anxiety by relaxing your muscles as you realise they are tense. This technique is probably one of the trickiest mental training techniques to master, but one of the most rewarding (for general wellbeing) once you get the knack of it. So, practise regularly and take your time.

PMR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE:

Either record the following script onto an MP3/smartphone, or get a friend to read it and take you through the routine:

"Begin by sitting or lying comfortably. Focus your attention only on your body. If your mind starts wandering, bring it back to the muscle you are working on.

"Take a deep breath, expanding your diaphragm (abdomen) and hold for a few seconds, then exhale slowly (through nose or mouth). Repeat.

"Let's begin: tighten the muscles in your forehead by raising your eyebrows as high as you can. Hold for about 10 seconds. Abruptly release, feeling the tension drain away and your (forehead) muscles relax.

"Pause for 10 seconds.

"Repeat the process with forehead muscles.

"Remember to keep breathing through the entire exercise.

"Move on to your mouth, smiling widely, feeling your mouth and cheeks tense. Hold for 10 seconds, then release your muscles and feel the tension drain away.

"Repeat the process with forehead muscles.

"Now work your way through your body, practising PMR on your arms, hands, shoulders, upper/lower legs, feet (every muscle group in your body)."

PMR – TRY IT:

Practise and perfect PMR at home, then go mobile. The night before/morning of your race.

At the start line of your race.



These meditative techniques will help you centre yourself and run your best.



Our team of experts are on hand to answer your **RUNNING-RELATED QUESTIONS**, from training to nutrition, health to injury prevention

ASK *the* EXPERTS:

BETTER BREAKFAST?

Q Due to work commitments I've just had to switch from my regular evening runs to running in the morning. I love my morning smoothies (usually milk, banana, berries, almonds and spinach) as I don't really have a taste for solid food first thing in the morning but when I try to run after having my usual breakfast smoothie I find I have toilet 'issues' early on in the run. Are there any changes I can make to my smoothie to prevent this? Or do I have to do away with it completely?

Janet, London

Smoothies can be great after a run, if you get the ingredient balance right.



A Finding out what works for you before a morning run can be tricky and it's very individual – some people can eat a huge bowl of cereal and feel fine running just 45 minutes later, while others struggle with eating anything less than two hours before a run. Yet it's essential to find what you can tolerate so that you have the chance to maximise your running performance and minimise any gastric upset, bloating or feelings of heaviness. Smoothies can be a great way to get a balance of carbs, protein, fibre and healthy fats in one quick and easy blitz – yet pre-run we don't necessarily want or need the same as when we're just heading to work!

Many of the ingredients in your smoothie could cause gastric problems if consumed too soon before a run – protein, fat, fibre and milk products can

all increase gastric symptoms during exercise. Although the smoothie is not particularly high fat, the combination of fruit, nuts and spinach will mean it's high in fibre, and with the addition of milk it's going to increase gut problems. As well as this, having a large amount of liquid in the stomach can also trigger the relaxation of sphincters in the digestive system (not what you want when you're running!).

So if you want to stick with your smoothie as your pre-run breakfast, I'd recommend doing the following:

- » Switch to a non-dairy milk option such as oat, rice or almond milk.
- » Use just one fruit or vegetable – banana good as it's easily digested
- » Add sweetness and some more carbs for energy with a teaspoon of honey
- » Add flavour without irritating the gut with cinnamon or nutmeg
- » Reduce the quantity of liquid
- » Avoid nuts, leafy veg and fibrous fruits like pears, apples, raspberries



NUTRITION RUTH TONGUE

Ruth is a nutritionist and health journalist with over ten years experience in the health industry. With a background in sports science and health promotion, Ruth also teaches Pilates and delivers corporate wellness programmes across the UK, as well as running Pilates retreats in France, Mallorca and the UK.
ruthtongue.com @ruthtonguebites

Achilles injury is a pain, but there's no reason you can't get back to full movement again.



RETURN TO RUNNING

Q Any advice on running again after rupturing my Achilles? I was running 3:45 for a marathon before my injury in May 2013. I've run on and off since May 2014, 6-7 miles at the most and have taken up road biking as well but would like to get back to running even if it's not a full marathon.

Aurel D'Agrosa, Hove

A Good to hear you are back running again! If you were off for a year it sounds like you had a complete rupture, which typically means 6 to 9 months of no running if you had surgery, and up to 12 months if you were immobilized in plaster as opposed to operated on (your email does not specify which).

When you say you have managed 6-7 miles at most, I will presume that this is because any more than that is causing too much pain. I am not aware what exercises you have performed as rehab or are continuing to perform, but it is vital that you support your gradual return to running with some suitably graded loading exercises for the Achilles tendon. These generally involve standing on tip toe or slowly lowering down from tip toe to the floor (I would need to assess you in person to say exactly what form of the exercise you would need) but in my experience the most common mistake with this group of exercises is not using enough weight.

In order to help your Achilles & calf complex return to being able to deal with the load demands of running

(together they play a huge role in generating propulsion), it is imperative that enough weight is used during exercises to cause total fatigue. It is only by taking them to failure that the body will be stimulated enough to cause an adaptive response, i.e. get stronger. Too many runners strive for 2 minute isometric contractions or 30 repetitions when in reality they would achieve more by adding enough weight to make 30 seconds or 12 repetitions challenging. If you take it to failure, you will see that in time it takes more and more weight to stop you, so access to a selection of weights at home or membership of a gym can make a big difference when it comes to rehabilitating not just the Achilles tendon but most running injuries.

Another point, though again this may not be the case for you, is not to fear pain. A serious injury like the total tear of a tendon can naturally leave you and more importantly your nervous system very wary of putting load through it again, especially when you start performing the same activity that you were doing when you tore it. Pain is part of our incredibly sophisticated defence system, an alarm system that keeps us alive. It would be a fairly useless system if it

only went off after the damage had already been done, which is why pain is a warning of threat and not a measure of actual damage. In remembering this, try not to be afraid of 2's & 3's out of 10 (where 10 represents the worst pain you have ever felt). It often takes repeated exposure of 2's and 3's to help the system 'desensitise' and allow you to do more. Both your rehab exercises and slowly more demanding running can be used to demonstrate to your defence system that it doesn't need to be so protective. It may take time, but it's you holding the reins.

Of course, ignoring 6's and 7's will have the opposite effect and create further threat to your system, which in return can cause an increase in sensitivity and see you start experiencing more pain after doing surprisingly less. Recovery is all about provoking the right amount of exposure but not too much.

The up road biking is a great idea to put a little more load through the tendon and improve your cardiovascular fitness, but again, make sure you are not shying away from a little pain (just in case you are!).

I hope this advice helps Aurel. Let me know how it goes!



INJURY MATT PHILLIPS

is a Running Performance Coach & Injury Specialist at StrideUK & Studio57clinic. Follow Matt on Twitter: @sportinjurymatt

WINTER WEATHER WOES

Q How do I stop my eczema getting worse when I'm training outdoors? This time of year it is at its worst, and no matter how much I moisturise, my skin still dries out and becomes sore when I'm out in the cold. I do try to keep my skin as covered and protected as best I can, but it is the areas on my face which are causing me most trouble. Do you have any suggestions that may help?

Joe Standen, Cardiff

A You're not alone here. Eczema, also known as 'dermatitis', is a common dry skin condition, which tends to be at its worst this time of year. Understanding more about the skin and what it does, helps us manage the condition.

Our skin is our protection from the elements, helping us maintain our body temperature and prevent harmful bacteria entering our bodies. Healthy skin is plumped full of water, creating a firm protective barrier with no gaps. In eczema, the skin is dry, as it is less able to retain water. As a result, it cracks and breaks down more easily, becoming sore and inflamed.

Like most conditions, eczema can

vary in its severity, from intermittent mild flare-ups to debilitating chronic daily symptoms. Triggers will vary from person to person, but this time of year when the weather is cold, symptoms are often at their worst. Sweat can also be a trigger. The salt in sweat can dehydrate the skin, causing soreness and irritation.

Here are some top tips to help settle your symptoms, and improve your skin's overall health:

» **Moisturise before and after exercise. Use a lighter application of ointment a good hour before you run, allowing time for it to absorb fully.**

» **Choose 100% cotton clothing. Avoid synthetic fabrics and stick to looser garments to avoid rubbing.**

» **Protect your exposed bits. It is difficult and not practical to cover up**

your face when you run, but hats and gloves should be an essential.

» **Hydrate. This should go without saying, but hydrating shouldn't just come from the outside application of creams. Drink plenty of water before, during and after exercise.**

» **Avoid temperature extremes. It is tempting to hop into a hot shower after a run, but sudden changes in temperature can trigger your eczema to flare. Gradually increase and decrease the shower temperature.**

As a take home point, the benefits of exercise in eczema are clear. They improve physical and mental well-being and reduce stress, which, in turn, helps control eczema. So if these measures don't help control it, don't give up. Have a chat with your GP as to what more can be done.



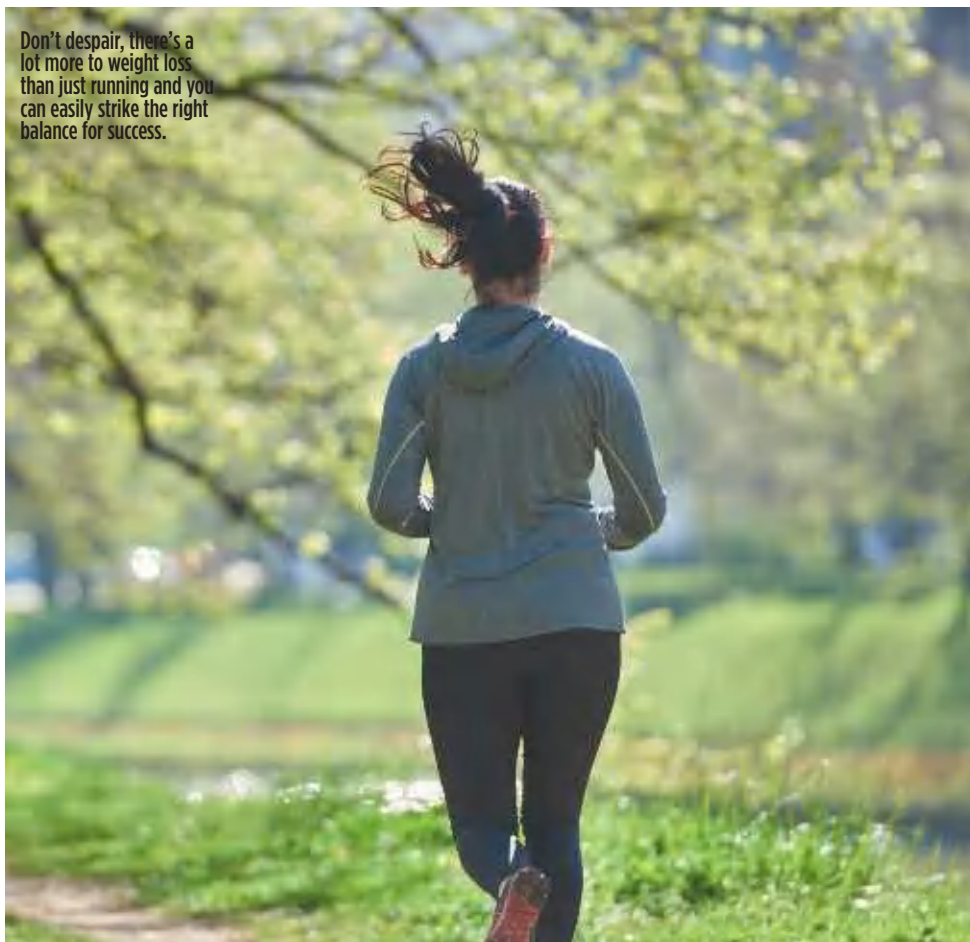
HEALTH DR YVETTE BRINDLE

Yvette is a General Practitioner in Chester. She is trained in women's health and has a keen interest in running, fitness well-being, weight control and nutrition. She enjoys running with her local group and entering races for charity.



Winter is a trying time for runners with dermatitis but there are some measures you can take to ease the problem.

Don't despair, there's a lot more to weight loss than just running and you can easily strike the right balance for success.



PSYCHOLOGY SUZIE WYLIE

Suzie lives and practices in York as a Personal Trainer and Eating Psychology Coach/Level 1 Holistic Lifestyle Chek Practitioner. She is currently working towards an MSc in Nutrition Therapy. Together with her formal qualifications, she draws knowledge from her own personal journey of disordered eating as a teen and IBS diagnosis at age 18. In more recent years she put her knowledge into practice; training successfully and maintaining correct nutrition and hormonal balance as a professional Muay Thai fighter in Thailand.

CAN'T LOSE WEIGHT

Q I took up running to lose weight, but it hasn't worked; so far I haven't lost a pound. I thought running was great for weight loss? I'm losing motivation – Where am I going wrong?

Jane Myers, Bude

A First, congratulations on deciding to take up running as it can be an extremely rewarding way to exercise and can certainly be a successful tool when it comes to unwanted weight gain. Try not to be discouraged, in that you don't feel your efforts are working; it merely identifies that there are some areas where you may need to make some changes in order to kick start your weight loss, such as nutrition, ensuring sufficient rest and relaxation, addressing your thought processes and taking into account any current life stressors.

If running is only something that you have recently taken up then it can take time for the body to adapt, and rather than restricting your goal to 'weight loss', think about how you feel after running; whether you feel you

have more energy; whether you have noticed that clothes fit and feel different; and whether your running has improved. Focusing solely on weight loss and a number on a scale can have a profound effect on your mindset – that is, if the number is not the right number that you want to see!

Also, review your current running schedule in terms of variety. Choosing to run would suggest that you enjoy running, so perhaps ask yourself: are there ways I can enhance my enjoyment? For example, running in nature; buddying up with a friend; varying the intensity/distances; including short bursts, hills and/or longer steady runs will also challenge your cardiovascular system in different ways, and boost your metabolism.

Nutrition is key, and the majority of weight loss is achieved in the kitchen. Start to keep a food diary to enable you to assess your diet and volume

(sometimes people 'reward' themselves with food/drinks after exercise). Ensure you eat adequate protein carbohydrates and healthy fats and avoid processed foods and sugar.

Effective rest and relaxation are also a crucial part of any exercise regime, allowing your body to recover and adapt, and it can also be a great way to help combat any life stressors. Effective strategies can come in the form of a good night's sleep, forms of meditation, gentle walks, yoga and even fun and laughter.

So, I would suggest relaxing into your current body shape and weight, and be proud of the fact that you are taking action to address any unwanted weight. Be patient, as there is no quick fix to any weight loss regime – sustainable weight loss takes time but done right, can be an insightful journey and will be well worth it for your body, mind and soul.



DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION? Email the team at rf.ed@kelsey.co.uk
Twitter: [@Runfitmag](https://twitter.com/Runfitmag) Facebook: facebook.com/RunningFitness



WHAT'S IN YOUR KIT BAG?

JO PAVEY

The long-distance runner shares her training essentials



REHYDRATION

When training I'll have Powerbar electrolyte drinks and recovery drinks in my bag to help with hydration and then recovery from hard workouts. (powerbar.eu)

DIARY

My interval session notebook also comes with me wherever I go. It has an outline plan of



my sessions and then the times I ran are recorded in it afterwards. Sometimes I'll modify a session as it develops so this helps me keep track.

ENERGY FOOD I also use bar and gels, as well

"My interval session notebook comes with me wherever I go. Sometimes I'll modify a session as it develops so this helps me keep track."

as Powerbar, during training – I use the bar to snack on in the last two

hours before a big session. The gel I use just before a race or session for a quick energy boost.

TRACKS I always have music with me for motivation; artists on my playlist include

The Killers, U2, Paloma Faith, and Lady Gaga.

RUNNING SHOES

Good trainers are important for any runner – I use the adidas Ultra BOOST which are nice and light as well as



waterproof but also lightweight and breathable.

TAPE One thing I take with me wherever I go is foot tape. Since I was young I've struggled with blisters due to the biomechanics of my foot and the way I run. (rock tape.net)



being very comfortable. (adidas.co.uk)

OUTDOOR WEAR

Being a UK athlete I always need a good training jacket for our lovely weather! I use the adidas Supernova Storm jacket, which is

BLOGGER OF THE MONTH



This month, we're reading Patricia Carswell's blog, *Sporty Over Forty* (sportyoverforty.com). Here she muses why we feel guilty for doing something good



Anyone who has the drive to get out and run every day should be proud!

GUILTY SECRET?

It was the muddy trainers I first noticed. I'd bumped into a friend in the supermarket and spotted that instead of her usual smart boots she was dressed for something far more active.

"Oh, those," she said, sheepishly. "Yes, I've, um, started running. But I'm really slow. And I don't go very far at all. I mean, it's hardly running at all."

It turned out that despite all her excuses, my friend was now running every day. I was dead impressed. Anyone with the drive to put on their running shoes and

hit the trail every single morning has my respect.

PLAYING IT DOWN

My friend had no need to apologise, but she's not alone in making excuses for her running. So many of us – myself included – come up with a list of reasons why what we do isn't impressive at all. "I only do parkrun," they'll say, even though parkrun is just as tough as any 5K. "I'm really slow," they'll insist, even though they're lapping everyone on the couch. Even marathon runners will tell you that theirs doesn't count as it was a flat course.

Perhaps it's a British thing. My American friends rarely feel the need to apologise for their running. They're far more likely to post their time on Facebook or give you a blow-by-blow account of their last race. They run. Running is good. End of story.

WHY SO MODEST?

So why are we Brits so quick to make light of our abilities and achievements? It's partly that we don't want to seem boastful. Nice people don't brag, after all. We're conditioned to being modest, to keeping our achievements to ourselves. But it's not just that. Many of us genuinely feel we're not good enough. We get our excuses in early so we don't feel bad about not matching up to some invisible gold standard. If we put ourselves down, nobody will scrutinise our efforts and find us wanting.

This is all the more so for people who, like me, were unsporty at school. If you spent years being the last one to be picked for the team, it can take a lifetime to get used to the idea that you might actually be athletic. But apologising for our running means we're selling ourselves short. All running – whether it's a jog around the block or an ultra-marathon – takes commitment and drive and discipline. It would be so much easier to stay glued to the sofa, to catch up on that box set, to put it off for another day. So let's be proud of our efforts and start celebrating our running, whether we've put in a PB or barely made it home in one piece, whether we're dressed in the latest kit or a tatty vest and antique leggings. So what if there's someone who's faster, fitter and stronger? Let's face it, there always will be, and that's OK.



DRINK THIS

Swap your post-workout fruit smoothie for a vegetable drink and cut down on sugar while still benefitting from all the nutrition. iCho! Bottled gazpacho contains 6.7g of sugar per 250ml bottle, in comparison with a fruit smoothie, which contains 26.5g. At £1.89 per bottle. It's a good, low-cost way to rehydrate and get some of your five a day!

Chogazpacho.com



EAT THIS

We can't get enough of paleo bars Primal Pantry in the *RF* office: energy-rich ingredients such as dates and nuts are cold pressed for each bar, working on the theory that heat can break down some of the nutrients. Take it from us, once you've tried them, you won't look back! £27 for 18 bars, **primalpantry.com**

Read more from Patricia at www.sportyoverforty.com

If you're going to put yourself through hell,
you might as well do it in heaven.

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Running Fitness | SPECIAL REPORT

Loch Ness Marathon Report

RF's intrepid Consultant Editor Sarah Russell took a flying visit to **INVERNESS** to tackle her 13th marathon at the Baxters Loch Ness Marathon. Here's her verdict



I'm not a fan of road marathons in general. I much prefer running on the trail and enjoy events where the focus isn't on the finish time. However, the lure of the Baxters Loch Ness marathon was intriguing. I'd heard nothing but good things about it and, despite not having run a road marathon for six years, I was keen to see what all the fuss was about.

I've done 13 marathons over the years and the Loch Ness Marathon was without doubt the most hospitable and supportive I've ever done. The famous Scottish hospitality is right at the very heart of this event, from the pasta party right through to the support on the course from both spectators and runners alike. I couldn't recommend it highly enough.

ORGANISATION

As a former race director of a half marathon, the logistics of this event made my eyes water. The race starts right up at the top of Loch Ness, in a stunning – yet remote – location near to Fort Augustus. The route then follows the edge of the Loch and finishes back down in the centre of Inverness. The organisers have to transport all 2,000 runners from the race village in Inverness at 7.30am in time for the race start at 10am, on a fleet of buses. As I said, eye-watering logistics. This incredible feat seemed to happen seamlessly and easily – although according to the organiser, every single bus and coach in the Highlands was called into action! Hats off to the organisers though; they made what I'm fairly sure is a logistical nightmare a stress-free experience for the runners.

At the start there was free (yes free!) tea and coffee to keep everyone warm and hundreds of portaloos with the all-important toilet marshal keeping the queue moving. The start is remote and exposed. We were lucky with the weather, but I did wonder what it would be like if it was cold or wet. There was no shelter, and because runners are bussed up there early, there's a fair bit of standing around.

The race 'village' at the finish area was small, friendly and very well organised. I loved the huge inflatable 'Nessie' standing

guard over the finish line! The Baxters pasta party the night before was low key yet fun and there was plenty of food, drink and products and brands to browse.

The first aid tent was a particular highlight for me post-race where I was nursed back to warmth with a heater, blanket and cup of tea.

The organisation of this event really cannot be faulted. It's the attention to the small details that make it for me. It's small things like having a waterproof baggage tag that show the thinking that goes on behind the scenes.

THE ROUTE

I'm a trail runner at heart. Road and city marathons don't really rock my boat, so I had mixed feelings beforehand. But I didn't need to worry. The Loch Ness marathon was different. It may have taken place on a 'road' but it was more of a country lane which undulated gently along the edge of Loch Ness. The scenery was simply beautiful, the air was clean and crisp and the road closed to traffic. Heaven. The route twisted and turned through pine forests and pretty highland villages; always with the glittering Loch Ness to the left.

My one standout moment was running in silence with nothing but the sound of running feet and the Loch gently lapping at the shore to my side. Then a few miles further along, a lone spectator playing bagpipes. No roaring crowds or overwhelming noise, just simplicity and peace. Just how I like it.

Consequently, I didn't enjoy the final few miles into the town. Running on the road with cars and past Tesco took the edge off the tranquillity which had gone before.

The route itself actually has a net downhill profile. There is a -200m difference from start to finish. But don't be led into a false sense of security, there are plenty of undulations along the way to keep you on your toes. None of the 'hills' are especially steep, just rolling. There's a fairly pokey climb at about 18 miles which goes on for around two miles, but again it's not steep, just lengthy.

The size of the event is perfect at 2,000

runners. Just enough to create a nice atmosphere, but not too many to make the route crowded.

Despite the undulations, I think it's a fairly fast course and I heard many people say they ran good times. The winning man crossed the line in 2:25 and the winning lady was 2:44.

The finish is fun. You run the final mile along the side of the river through Inverness and over the finish under the watchful eye of a giant inflatable 'Nessie'. Who says the monster doesn't exist?


ATMOSPHERE

Being led onto the start in the middle of the Highlands by Scottish pipers brought tears to my eyes and a shiver to my spine. Bagpipes always do that to me and it was a fitting start to the race. The general atmosphere was really chilled and relaxed, with lots of laughter and fun and a sense of no pressure. During the race I was able to strike up conversation with lots of other runners and found people from all over the world. Loch Ness still has that International draw, even for a relatively small race.

The overriding thing that struck me most was the sense of camaraderie, support and friendship that I've really only ever seen in ultras and trail runs before. I can honestly say that Loch Ness Marathon was the friendliest and most supportive road marathon I've ever done.

I didn't have a great run and suffered and struggled my way through it. But I lost count of the number of runners who patted me on the back, asked if I was ok and pulled me to my feet from the side of the road. I've never had that from strangers before – at least not in a road marathon, where everyone else is too focused on their own time. It was like a breath of fresh air! Bravo Loch Ness Marathon runners – you get the award for the friendliest marathon runners in the UK.

FINAL VERDICT:

If you want the perfect autumnal marathon with a friendly crowd, stunning scenery and an interesting (not flat) course, then The Loch Ness marathon is the one. 



PROBABLY THE FRIENDLIEST MARATHON IN THE WORLD

WHERE: Loch Ness, Inverness, Scotland

WHEN: 25 September 2016

HOW TO GET THERE: I flew with EasyJet from Gatwick to Inverness airport, then took a taxi (30 min drive) to my hotel in the centre of Inverness. From there it was a short walk to the event village and race finish. Very easy, cheap and surprisingly hassle-free.

WHERE TO STAY: I stayed in the lovely Glen Mhor Hotel (theinvernesshotel.co.uk), a medium-sized hotel which is situated right on the river, so has gorgeous views, and just a short hobble from the race finish. The race route actually goes tantalisingly past the hotel at 25 miles.

lochnessmarathon.com



‘I’ve done 13 marathons over the years and the Loch Ness Marathon was **without doubt the friendliest and most supportive’**



JONATHAN ALBON

British athlete Jonathan regularly competes in the toughest **OBSTACLE COURSE RACES** in the world. He has just won the Reebok Spartan Race European Championships

INTERVIEW Rebecca Gibbs

How/when did you first discover you were good at running?

I always knew I could run but wasn't aware how good I was (or how good I could be); I never found it hard to run when required at school. It wasn't until my 20s though that I entered a few events and started training for running.

What is it about obstacle races that you most enjoy?

I enjoy how each one is different so it is always interesting and fun. I also enjoy that the fitness required is really healthy; you have to be fast, strong and adaptable... In order to do well, you have to be well rounded.

Do you prefer to race at low level or doing skyrunning events?

I like both, it's always nice to run in local or easier events as part of training but ultimately if you want to get a true feeling of how good you are, you need to race against the best. To be honest, some of the best feelings I get from running are when I just run in the mountains alone.

Are there any obstacles or parts of the courses that you really dread – or look forward to?!

I have had hypothermia a few times from obstacle racing so I never look forward to the cold, especially if you have to put your head under in icy water. I usually look forward to running sections planned through forests with no path; this wild running is really fun and makes me feel like I am running an orienteering race... I just don't have to worry about the map reading bit.

How confident are you feeling in the build-up towards the Spartan Race World Championships, where you will be defending your title in America?

To be totally honest I haven't got much hope for myself. The race will be held at elevation (Lake Tahoe) and I live at sea level. I haven't had any experience of elevation until this year and find it really affects me both physically and psychologically. I do feel like I have got myself in the same or better shape than last year though and will be giving it 100% as always.

What have been your most memorable obstacle races or running experiences so far?

The best feeling I get when I'm running is when I am moving fast but it feels effortless. This feeling often comes when I am running alone in the mountains, in these moments I truly feel free and alive.

How do you train? How much time is spent running (in/outdoors?) and on cross-training/strength work?

I never run indoors, even when I was living in London I would have to be paid a lot of money to consider a treadmill! My training weeks are usually broken down something like the following per week:
Running 10-15 hours (100-140km)
Circuit training 3x1hour
Cycling 3-4 hours
Bouldering 2x2hour
Swimming 1x1hour
You can follow all the training I do on Strava... [strava.com/athletes/437111](https://www.strava.com/athletes/437111)

Are you strict with your nutrition? Do you have any cheat days?

I eat like a normal human being. I don't use any special powders or supplements. I do try to eat non processed foods though, especially the ones with an high sugar content.

What footwear do you train/compete in?

VJ Sport. They are an Orienteering brand from Finland that not many people have heard of but they create shoes that are truly special. This is a company that still values the shoe function and quality over sales and profit. The materials used are only the best and the design is flawless. I use the VJ Irock for muddy wet conditions and the VJ Sava Amas for trails.

Do you have a favourite obstacle race? And are there any events or courses you would still like to try?

At the moment I'm also really enjoying competing in the Toughest Series; they have some great obstacles and are furthering obstacle course racing! I love the Spartan races, and the



“The best feeling I get when I’m running is when I am moving fast but it feels effortless.”



Jonathan ahead of the pack...

**ESSENTIAL
INFO**

Jonathan is hoping to defend his title at the Spartan Race World Championships in the US.





Jonathan trains to be the fittest he can be, whether it's running or obstacle racing.

opportunity that their European and World Championships provide to really compete at a high level against other Spartans around the globe.

What motivates you to keep running/training even on a day when you're not feeling 100%?

I literally love to run, so that is never a problem. What keeps me doing the hard sessions like intervals, etc. is the thought that the harder I train, the easier I can win. This will let me enjoy the race.

Which other athletes inspire you?

I have never really had any role models in

sport. I have found this has worked out quite well as I will never get upset if they are caught using sport enhancing drugs and I won't put limits on myself by trying to copy what they do or their beliefs.

Have you had any bad injuries or setbacks, and how have you recovered from them?

This year was my first. All through the winter and spring I was struggling with shin splints. I learnt a lot and am probably stronger because of it now but it did really suck. Unfortunately, the best thing for that injury is to not run and that's exactly what I love to do.

Do you have any tips for keeping fit and improving one's running style?

Find ways to enjoy running or training. If you enjoy what you are doing you will do it more and better... making you fitter. Whether this is running with friends, finding new routes or even running to a cool place.

If you hadn't specialised as an obstacle racer, is there any other athletic discipline that you think you might have gone into – or would like to try?

I wouldn't say I have specialised as an

obstacle racer. I don't train to be an obstacle racer; I simply train to be the healthiest and fittest human being possible. I think to specialise in any sport probably isn't that healthy. I'd like to be able to sprint really fast and also crush a marathon distance event or longer and do this while being able to carry a sandbag up a mountain if someone asked me to!

What is your favourite...

Piece of kit?

Buff or Wrag – these have billions of uses, many more than advertised if you are a little inventive.

Sports gadget?

My GPS watch – I enjoy tracking my training and seeing where I went and how fast (or slow).

Music to run/exercise to?

I don't run with music.

Post-workout snack or meal?

Chocolate milk after a race with a coffee for the drive home.

Way to relax?

Sauna (preferably somewhere in Scandinavia with snow to roll in) followed by sitting by a fire (preferably with a nice drink to enjoy like a glass of red wine).



Obstacle courses throw a lot at competitors but Jonathan embraces it all!

The Spartan Race World Championships are held in Squaw Valley near Lake Tahoe on 3 October. These are some of the toughest obstacle courses in the world and see competitors race over the Spartan Beast distance – 20km+, facing over 25 obstacles. To find out more or sign up for a race visit spartanraceuk.uk



FX-Sport launch VRX wireless smart sport headphones with built in customisable personal trainer.

FX-Sport have created a unique database of professionally constructed training sessions which are compatible with their patented VRX wireless smart sport headphones. Named the "Workout Store", users can upload any one of hundreds of free workouts directly to the VRX headphones independently of their own music.

A user also has the choice to create workouts in their own words to play at designated times over their own music. The sport headphones hold a premium quality 8GB mp3 player and can also be used for swimming with an accessory.

In addition, "Real Coach Training Apps" can be uploaded to the headphones which are the actual voice and workouts of real trainers, athletes and coaches. Dave Scott, 6 time world champion triathlete at the Ironman distance is one such coach, along with online trainers such as Scott Herman and Joanna Soh. 5k runner James Ellis has also designed multi week running programs which can be uploaded entirely to the device.



Many different categories and free training programs are available in the Workout Store - weight training, circuit training, calisthenic workouts, running fartlek/HIIT sessions, 8 - 12 week 5k, 10k, half marathon programs, swim sessions, bike interval sessions, "bums and tums" workouts, jump rope, triathlon brick sessions, aqua exercise and even walking sessions.

The VRX headphones retail for £129. For more details see www.fx-sport.co.uk

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ON YOUR FEET

It isn't all in the arch, and heavily **CUSHIONED RUNNING SHOES** may not actually be the best type of trainers for you. *RF* columnist Matt Phillips explains why...

How do you choose the running shoes you buy? Do you get advice from a professional? What criteria do they use to select the 'best' shoe for you? Although the tide is slowly changing, there are still a lot of myths circulating out there regarding how to select appropriate running shoes, ranging from 'not a lot of evidence' to 'simply not true'. Despite what you may have read or been told, research shows that there really isn't a hard-and-fast way of telling what type of running shoe will be best at keeping injury away.

LOW ARCHES AND OVERPRONATION

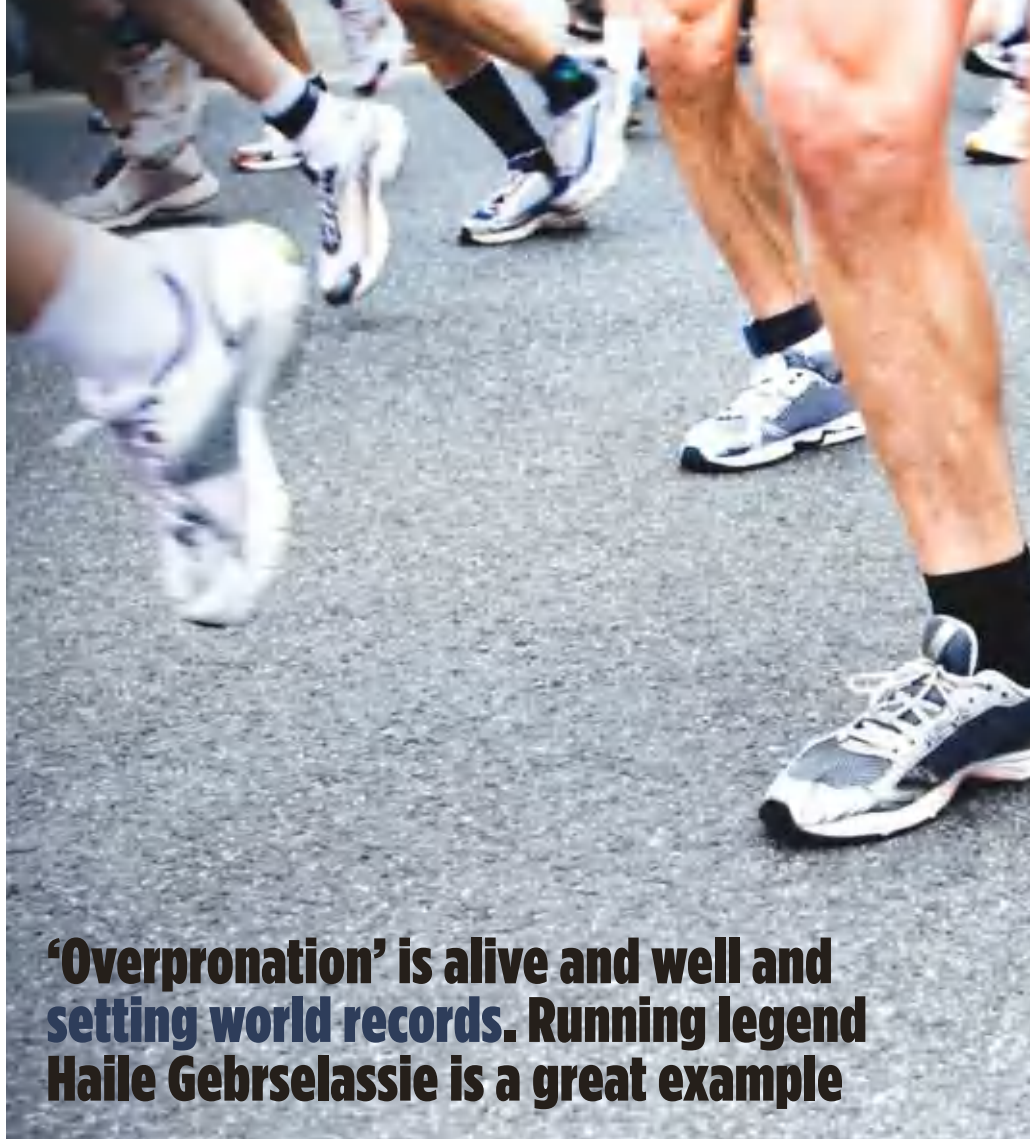
Although popular, the traditional method of selecting running shoes according to arch type (high/neutral/low) is not actually based on any scientific evidence. In fact, research suggests that choosing your footwear in this way provides about the same chance of injury prevention as choosing a shoe at random. And sometimes it can make things worse!

WHY IS 'ARCH TYPE' USED?

In a nutshell, because it's simple. It allows all runners to be placed into one of three categories for which each has a shoe type solution. The idea is believed to have come from a military study on interpreting enemy footprints by seeing what marks they left in the snow. This developed into the 'wet foot test', i.e. the imprint that your wet foot leaves on the ground telling us whether you have high, neutral or low arches, and that those with high arches need a more cushioned shoe, those with low arches a motion control shoe, and those of us who are in the middle and 'normal' can enjoy a 'neutral' shoe. A neat, tidy idea but sadly no evidence to support it.

OVERPRONATION

Though the wet foot test is generally no longer used as a way of recommending shoes, what happens at arch level continues to form the basis of most running shoe selection and recommendation. Many injured runners tell me they are 'pronators' as if that was some kind of problem. Pronation is a natural movement that occurs when we walk, run and jump. It refers to a series of joint movements at foot level that allow us to absorb impact (decelerate) and prepare for the next push off (accelerate). One of the most noticeable is the dropping of the arch on the inside of the foot (the medial longitudinal arch). But, as is so often the case with human physiology, how much the arch drops can vary a lot according to the individual. Somehow, the shoe industry decided that everybody should be pronating a certain



'Overpronation' is alive and well and setting world records. Running legend Haile Gebrselassie is a great example

amount, and if you fell outside the ideal 'neutral' position you were opening yourself to injury. But there is no robust evidence to suggest an optimum amount of pronation. You only have to look at some of the elites to realise that 'overpronation' is alive and well and setting world records. Running legend Haile Gebrselassie is a great example.

HOW DO WE CHOOSE RUNNING SHOES?

So, despite the erroneous explanations, we do know that different types of running shoes help some runners out, some of the time. We just don't know how or why. Researchers are working hard to discover why some runners with, for example, low arches benefit from motion control shoes but others get even more injured. In the meantime it's a case of using trial and error and going by what feels comfortable. Though this sounds like a very unscientific way of choosing running shoes, research has linked comfort with reduced injury, so there is in fact more evidence for using comfort than anything else.

DEGREE OF CUSHIONING

It's natural to feel that repeated landing on a hard surface like pavement, track or treadmill demands some form of cushioning. This is why running shoes traditionally have a built up heel. And yet,

studies show that the moment when the highest amount of load travels through our leg is not at initial contact (when many of us at lower speeds land on the heel) but actually at midstance when your bodyweight is over your foot, or at toe off when your back foot leaves the ground. In other words, for many runners reducing impact is probably more of a question of improving running form rather than wearing built up heels.

There is also growing evidence that the body has its own very clever way of dealing with impact and different running surfaces. Every step you take, internal receptors are feeding back information to the brain so that it can make necessary adjustments to minimise potential harm. To deal with changes in impact forces, it has options like modifying joint stiffness, changing the way the foot strikes the ground, and also via a concept known as 'muscle tuning'. Based on information received visually and from the previous foot strike, the body adjusts how strongly the muscles in your leg contract before the foot hits the ground again. Imagine jumping on a trampoline – your legs naturally stiffen in preparation for the soft landing. Now imagine yourself jumping onto concrete – your legs naturally become less stiff in preparation for the hard landing.



Shoes for treadmill might not be right for running on road or trail as well.

Everyone has a different running style and therefore will suit a different type of shoe.



Running Fitness | INJURY PREVENTION

LEG STIFFNESS & INJURY

If wearing more cushioned shoes equates to more stiffness in the legs and less cushioned shoes means less stiffness, how does this relate to injury risk? Well, as is so often the case in running injury research, results conflict. Some studies (Dr. Irene Davis) link increased leg stiffness with issues like plantar fasciitis and tibia stress fractures. But other studies (Dr. Benno Nigg) find that overall injury rates are slightly lower among runners with increased leg stiffness. The studies do mean that leg stiffness could be an important factor to consider with regards to certain injuries. If your body has suffered plantar fasciitis and tibia stress fractures, then one of the solutions worth considering (among the many other potential modifications) would be to try and wear a less cushioned shoe. By landing on a harder surface, your body will automatically reduce leg stiffness, which in theory could reduce your susceptibility to plantar fasciitis and tibia stress fractures. At this stage it is all theory, and we draw particular attention to the word 'try'. As always, introduce any changes to your habitual routine very slowly and gradually. Running shoes are no exception to this rule. Give your body a chance to tell you how it feels about the change before you do any harm to yourself.

GO FORTH AND TRY OUT DIFFERENT SHOES

There may not be any hard-and-fast model for selecting a running shoe, but try not to despair. See it as liberation as opposed to a hindrance. One of the best things to emerge from the downfall of the traditional running shoe selection model is that we today have a far larger variety of designs of running shoe to choose from.

Having seen that heavy cushioning is not necessarily helpful to everybody, you should now hopefully be more confident to test some lighter trainers. The secret is experimenting to see what feels comfortable for you.

And bear in mind that a trainer that suits you for one distance, terrain or speed may not work as well for another.

TRY SLIGHTLY LESS HEEL

The technical term for this is less of a 'drop' (the difference in height between the heel and the forefoot). Traditional running shoes have a heel-toe drop of about 12mm. Vibram Fivefingers have pretty much a drop of 0mm. Choosing a shoe that takes you straight from 12mm to 0mm is not a good idea. There is a wide range of 6-10mm trainers on the market which will allow you to experiment more gently.

MORE THAN ONE PAIR

If the majority of running related injuries are down to repetitive overload, one way to vary that load is to vary the type of trainer you wear during the week (as well as the type of terrain). Even a very slight change in trainer style will change the impact forces your legs have to deal with.

LISTEN TO YOUR BODY

If comfort is the best system we have of seeing if a particular running shoe suits our body, running on a shoe that niggles is not a good idea. Many of the running injuries I see in clinic are linked to a runner buying a new pair of trainers and failing to break them in gently. Even a new version of the same trainer can be slightly different. Respect the fact that your body will often need time to fully accept it.

F.I.T. BEFORE FOOTWEAR

At the end of the day, you can get injured in pretty much any shoe. Frequency, Intensity and Time of running play a far more important role in injury prevention than what you put on your feet. Running form can also play an important role, which is why gait analysis needs to be more about looking at running technique rather than a way of prescribing running shoes.



Q&A ODLO

This month we go behind the scenes at **ODLO** and talk exclusively to Endurance Division product manager Tom Louage about his running and favourite sports clothing

What is your job role, and what does a typical day involve?

I'm the Product Manager for the whole of ODLO's Endurance Division (Running, Bike and Cross Country Skiing) and my task is to monitor and guide the creation process of our products from the first idea until the finalised product that you can buy in the store.

Tell us about your running?

I used to be a very dedicated track runner at high school and university in Belgium. I was triple state champion and twice top 5 in the nationals in the 800m/1500m. My personal best for 10 miles was under 55 minutes. Currently I'm running to stay in shape and to get some stress relief but as I've never run a full marathon (only a few half marathons), I plan to re-focus on more structured training in the coming years.

Do you have a preferred time of day to run? And what are your favourite music tracks?

I prefer morning sessions before everyone is awake as they are priceless. I like running in the forests much more than the busy streets, and The Prodigy gives me the best boost during my runs!!!

Which clothing do you currently run in and what makes it so good for you?

Easy question, ODLO of course. Perfect

mix in performance and style. This winter my favourite pieces are the Zeroweight Jacket and the Fury Tights, with the Zerowight Shorts on top. My preferred base layer is the Evolution Blackcomb crew neck.

What do you think has been the biggest technological change/development in clothing over the last few years, and how has it affected ODLO in particular?

Winter clothing has changed completely. It's amazing how lightweight pieces can provide perfect protection against the elements without losing any comfort. Sports apparel materials are becoming more and more technical; it's fascinating to see what you can achieve with the right material.

Have you any thoughts on running clothing for the future?

Seamless garments are becoming more mainstream and the incorporation of technological gadgets inside products is going to be the direction for the future. It's going to get interesting, that's for sure.

Have you a "Greatest running shoe of all-time" and why?

I love the minimalistic trend. Many running shoes are too over-built. I love the trend to get back to the natural way of running.

Who would be your "Greatest runner of all-time" and why?

Haile Gebrselassie – just look at his results. He dominated all distances for almost two decades. Very impressive.

In three words, sum up what running means to you?

Back to nature.

If you were to give one piece of advice to someone buying running shoes, what would it be?

Don't look at the design, just make sure you take the shoes that are best for your body and running style.



BEHIND THE BRAND

NAME: Tom Louage
BRAND: ODLO
JOB TITLE: Endurance Division product manager



Tom currently runs for fitness rather than to race.





**“Many running shoes
are too over-built.
I love the trend to get
back to the natural
way of running.”**

PRODUCTS | *Running Fitness*

AUTUMN TRAIL SHOES PART 2

Our tried and tested pick of the best rugged footwear for
OFF-ROAD running this winter



1 ADIDAS ADIZERO XT TRAIL BOOST £105

This shoe is a lightweight option for those who want to run fast and have a responsive ride. The combination of Traxion lugs and a Continental rubber outsole provides great grip on all trail surfaces, while the built-in collar keeps out off-road debris.

adidas.co.uk



2 ASICS GEL FUJI RUNNEGADE £90

This shoe's ultra-rugged outsole means that it can cope with pretty much all off-road conditions, and is perfectly at home on wet and muddy trails. The cushioning is good, while the upper is made from rip stop mesh for durability and has a collar to keep out dirt and stones.

asics.co.uk



3 INOV-8 TERRACLAW 250 £120

Inov-8 have a wide range of trail shoes, but we loved the versatility of the Terraclaw 250. It held up well on smooth trail paths, but was just as good on rough, uneven descents, not faltering once. It is lightweight and responsive, and the X-LOCK overlays secure the foot in place.

inov-8.com



4 MERRELL ALL OUT TERRA TRAIL £100

This shoe's outsole has 6mm deep lugs for outstanding grip on trails. We found the fit outstanding, with the overlays locking the midfoot securely in place and the built-in sock keeping out debris.

merrell.com.uk



5 MIZUNO WAVE MUJIN 2 £115

This updated version of the Mujin has a better fitting water repellent upper to ensure your foot is secured in place. Decent cushioning is provided by Mizuno's Wave technology while the X10 carbon rubber outsole provides good durability.

mizuno.co.uk



6 SALOMON SPEEDCROSS VARIO £95

The Speedcross Vario outsole is less rugged than the Pro version and more suitable for firmer conditions, but still great in trail conditions. Cushioning was good and the tongue cover keeps out debris.

salomon.com/uk

OTHER GEAR And don't go without...



GARMIN FORERUNNER 15 £119.99

If you want a simple-to-use GPS watch, this is the one. Setup is straightforward, and just as easy once you're running. The display can show time, distance, speed and calories, and uploading them to your PC is easy with the Garmin Connect software. garmin.com

THE NORTH FACE LITUS 22-RC RUCKSACK £85

The North Face is known for its high performing products, and the Litus 22 lives up to expectations. It's lightweight, easy to load and has plenty of pockets. Straps are easy to adjust, allowing it to fit great even when the full 22ltr are taken up. thenorthface.co.uk



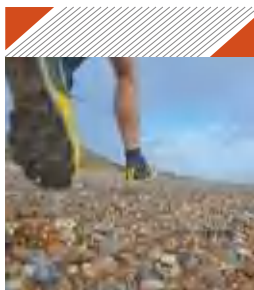
TRIONZ ULTRA-LOOP £29.99

The Ultra-Loop uses magnetic therapy to alleviate pain. Its four 1000-gauss magnets are thought to "improve blood circulation, reduce inflammation and decrease muscle discomfort which is often caused by a build-up of lactic acid." trionz.com

WILD RUNNING

SUFFOLK

Let **Running Fitness** take you on a journey to discover some of Britain's spectacular **MOUNTAINS, FORESTS** and **COASTAL TRAILS**, perfect for a wild run



Dunwich Heath

Distance: 9 miles (14km)

Start/finish: Vulcan Arms, Sizewell, IP16 4UD

Terrain: Field, path, track, road

Toughness: Easy

Ascent: 88 metres

Navigation: Moderate

Good for: Coast, wildlife, woodland

Route info: wildrunning.net/34

Despite a good stretch of (quiet) road, this run has a wonderful variety of scenery. From the pub, take the stile opposite, crossing fields to reach the Coast Path, passing the power station. Pass Minsmere Bird Reserve and climb up to the row of white cottages. Here the route heads inland across the beautiful Dunwich Heath and through woodland before following the road into Eastbridge village. Passing the Kenton Hills nature trail and the run follows blue waymarkers, heading across the Sizewell Belts and Leiston Common. Finally markers lead through more woodland, crossing Sandy Lane and then turning R on another Sandy Lane, returning to Sizewell.

It is said that, on a quiet day with a certain tide, the bells of the churches can still be heard echoing from the submerged old town of Dunwich on the Suffolk coast. It's certainly a peaceful, atmospheric place – and great for running – with miles of trails that loop their way across the open heathland, through nature reserves and along the edge of the restless sea.

ENGLISH PARADISE

Suffolk's quiet lanes, which are dotted with honesty boxes selling produce from the fertile land, wind their way through its gently rolling hills. A bit of a contrast from the flat lands of neighbouring Norfolk, there is a comforting, familiar Englishness about the place. On our first visit to Dunwich we headed for the Heath, finding it ablaze with a carpet of heather: a rainbow of purples, edged with delicate silk ribbons of silver birch.

We set off across the wide, open space, heading for a forest of pine trees on the horizon, the peat paths springy beneath our feet. We ran for an hour, looping the heath before making our way down towards the sea, following the coastal path through places of incredible contrast, from the eerie silence of the decommissioned power station to the abundance of nature in the reserves and woodlands.

BEAUTIFUL TRAILS

There are plenty of waymarked trails here, including the 62-mile Stour Valley Path, which is the venue for an annual ultramarathon that takes in its entire length. The Little Ouse Path follows the winding river for 10 enjoyable miles from Brandon to Thetford.

Races include the Thetford 10km (<http://gobeyondsport.co.uk/>), and the Great Barrow Challenge (<http://thegbc.co.uk/>).

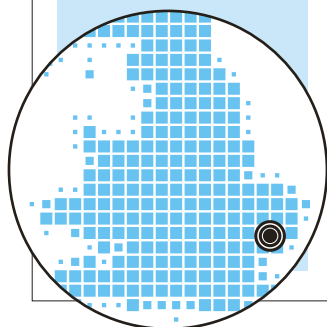
Despite a good stretch of (quiet) road, this run across the beautiful expanse of Dunwich Heath passes a wonderful variety of scenery and landscape.



Suffolk's beaches provide relatively firm sand for running on.



Beautiful scenery abounds on this Suffolk run.



INSPIRED TO DO YOUR OWN WILD RUN?

Share your photos and stories on our facebook page or tweet us

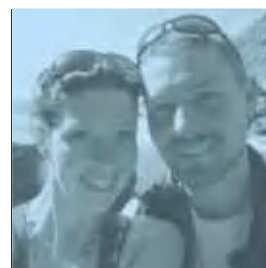


The contrasts on this route make it a real favourite.



DUNWICH HEATH

| Miles | Km | Directions |
|-------|------|---|
| 0.0 | 0.0 | From the pub head east towards beach, turning left and heading north along coast path past power station |
| 3.1 | 5.0 | Turn left at National Trust Visitor centre and follow footpath west across Dunwich Heath |
| 4.3 | 6.9 | At path junction continue on main path heading south west |
| 5.3 | 8.6 | Turn left onto lane and follow south through Eastbridge village |
| 6.3 | 10.1 | Turn left onto minor road and then right onto lane heading south |
| 7.1 | 11.4 | Turn left and then right, following blue waymarkers south east across Sizewell Belts and Leiston Common |
| 8.0 | 12.8 | Follow track south east through woodland, crossing Sandy Lane, then turning right onto Sandy Lane to return to Sizewell |



JEN AND SIM BENSON

are runners, writers and adventurers. Their new book *Wild Running: 150 Great Adventures on the Trails and Fells of Britain* (Wild Things Publishing) is the first UK guidebook for those who love to run and who dream of exploring Britain's spectacular mountains, forests and coastal trails.

RF reader offer

Running Fitness

readers can purchase the book at 30% off RRP with free UK P&P from wildrunning.net using code RF15.



All abilities are welcome
in this friendly Run
England club.



RUN ENGLAND GROUPS...

WALK JOG RUN



RUN ENGLAND is the official England Athletics beginner running project. Groups are led by trained group leaders, offering a progressive routine, people of a similar ability to start running with and plenty of support along the way. Find out more at runengland.org

A popular and **INSPIRING** run leader helps this group achieve their fitness goals

Rebecca Urry was inspired to take up running after noticing the physical transformation it was having on someone she knew. "I had seen a friend who seemed to have lost a lot of weight and toned up so I asked how she'd done it," she recalls. "My friend said that she'd joined a running group called Walk Jog Run. She gave me Anthony Hubbard's details and I registered."

Anthony is something of a role model for his group, who nominated Walk Jog Run to appear in *Running Fitness* because "We really want Anth's hard work to be recognised, he's a star!"

A runner for a number of years, after the 2012 Olympic Games in London, Anthony felt inspired to start making a difference and booked himself on a Run England Leadership in Running Fitness course.

"Anthony set up the group because he wanted to help and encourage people to get into running," explains Rebecca, "and it has escalated from there."

"The group's ethos is 'Running for everyone'. The Beginners Groups are aimed at the complete

Beginner, slowly building members up over the course of eight weeks, with the goal of running a 5k parkrun without stopping at the end of the programme. The Wednesday group is aimed at those who have completed the eight-week beginners programme or have some experience of running already i.e. can run for 30 minutes without stopping. Many use this group as a platform to train for 10ks and Half Marathons.

BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

"I love the camaraderie that we all have within the group," says Rebecca. "The feeling of completing something that you never thought you would ever do is amazing. We meet up on Wednesdays as a group at the start of the local parkrun event. We mainly run in and around Scunthorpe. Our sessions are very varied. Long or short distance, hill reps, speed work, intervals, sprints etc. There are varied abilities within the group. Obviously the beginners groups are mostly people who have never run before. The advanced group has runners who can complete



The group warms up and cools down together.



Walk Jog Run group leader
Anthony Hubbard

Essential info

How many members do you have?
30

Age range?
22-67

How many weekly training sessions do you hold?
Two: beginners on a Monday, advanced on Wednesday

What has been your highlight?
Competing in the North Lincs Half Marathon

If your group was an athlete, who would it be?
Paula Radcliffe. She, like a lot of us is a working mum who is juggling, a career, family and many other things.

Please describe the group in three words...
Amazing, inspirational, fun

runwithanth.com

"We often enter races as a group and always take before and after photos. We don't host any races ourselves. We are a special group because we are like a family, we encourage each other, we help each other and we have lots of fun. Anthony is the backbone of our group and he is our inspiration."

SETTING GOALS

Walk Jog Run surprised even Anthony at the rate it kept growing (from just a few people turning up in the beginning, to the 30 members it has today). The transformations and achievements motivated him to keep building on the club's success, and to better himself as well. After completing a number of 10k races, the advanced Wednesday group turned their attention to half marathon training. They all entered Mablethorpe Half Marathon and then set about training for the event (held on 14 October last year). Everyone who signed up showed the same dedication to training for the Half Marathon as they had to training for their first 5k and 10ks.

Encouraged and inspired by the success of Walk Jog Run, in July 2014 Anthony tackled the Ironman Zurich. It was his second ever Triathlon and his first Ironman. Anthony worked backwards from the date of event and planned in suitable training along with a lot of dedication and hard work. "Little did I know when I started running to get fit, that I was starting the journey towards becoming an Ironman," he muses. "Who knows where your running journey could take you..."



Nominate your group by emailing rf.ed@kelsey.co.uk (making the subject 'Run England').

a 5k race in 24 minutes and some who complete 5k in 38 minutes. Slower runners are sometimes given a shorter distance to run, but no-one is ever left on their own.

"We have a member who sometimes struggles with her confidence, she is a very competent runner and is one of our group's quicker ladies but she doesn't believe in herself. She reluctantly signed up for her first half marathon in the new year and completed the North Lincs Half marathon in 1:55:44 after being late across the start-line because she was busy queuing for the porta loo!

A man with a beard and a flat cap is running at night. He has a headlamp on his forehead and a pipe in his mouth. He is wearing a tweed jacket and shorts. In the background, another runner is visible, and the landscape is dark with some trees and hills under a cloudy sky.

5 BEST NIGHT EVENTS

Spice up your running and **CHALLENGE YOURSELF** with a fun-filled night race!

Dress up and have fun at the challenging Mighty Deer Stalker race in March.

HAVE YOU ENTERED A NIGHT RUN? TELL US ABOUT IT AT @Runfitmag OR SHARE ON Facebook.com/RunningFitness

2



1 OBSTACLE MIGHTY DEER STALKER

WHERE: Innerleithen, Scottish border

WHEN: 12 March 2016

DISTANCE: 15km (more or less!)

FEATURES: If you like adventure, trail-running and river-crossings, this event is for you! Not one for the faint-hearted, as race organisers sum it up: "This is probably the hardest off-road-Tweed-clad-pipe-lit-plus-four-and-headtorch-wearing run that exists." You'll run through forests, across rivers, over a steep hill or two. After the race, join in the mighty deerstalker party in a large warm tent with food, bands, beer, and dancing. All finishers receive a medal, tech tee, free finisher pic, and more. Runners have chip timing and feel safe with a fully marshalled course with water stations and medical staff.

RACE INFO: <http://ratrace.com/mightydeerstalker2016>

2 TEAM-BUILDING ENDURE 24

WHERE: Reading, UK

WHEN: 11-12 June 2016

DISTANCE: Up to you! You have 24 hrs...

FEATURES: Mizuno's 24-hour solo/team relay trail race is a unique running experience. The race starts at midday,

you run as many 5-mile laps as you can, running through the night and finishing at midday the next day. Glow sticks light your path at night (but head torches and hi-vis kit necessary). Feed/water stations dot the course and all participants and supporters enjoy a festive party afterwards.

RACE INFO: endure24.co.uk

3 FOREST/TRAIL THE DART DARK DASH

WHERE: Devon, UK

WHEN: 17 Dec 2015

DISTANCE: 10km off-road

Warm up for a series of night runs with this fun yet challenging night run in Devon. You'll run through the woods so need a head torch and hi-vis kit. Fancy dress is welcome and best fancy dress wins a prize! Mulled wine and tasty warm food greet you at the finish. This year there's a team competition too: up to five runners per team with the three fastest times in each group count towards the prize.

RACE INFO: wildrunning.co.uk

4 CYCLE - OUT AND BACK WOMEN V CANCER RIDE THE NIGHT

WHERE: Windsor to central London and back

3



4



5



WHEN: 28 May 2016

DISTANCE: 100km cycle

FEATURES: For those of you who like variety, we've included a cycling event in our 'best of' this month, with this women-only 100km night ride. Start and finish at Windsor Racecourse and cycle past some of London's iconic landmarks guided by the city lights; all in support of Breast Cancer Care, Ovarian Cancer Action and Jo's Cervical Cancer Trust. Growing in popularity, the night cycle is a fun event to do as a group, and the cross training will benefit your running!

RACE INFO: ridethenight.co.uk

5 HILLY/OFF-ROAD WILD NIGHT RUN

WHERE: Devon, UK

WHEN: 31 Jan 2015

DISTANCE: 5m or 10m

FEATURES: This exciting night run will keep you on your toes. It takes you across open moorland, up some sharp climbs and several downhill sections. Solo and team prizes. And anyone who beats the King and Queen of the Night also wins a prize. Night running sharpens your body and your brain – it's challenging, exhilarating and offers great team support. Give it a go!

RACE INFO: wildnightrun.co.uk



1





ROVING REPORTERS...

I DID IT!

Our team of **'ROVING REPORTERS'** reviews some of the events they've taken part in. Each reporter analyses the event and tells us if they'd do it again. They did it; maybe you will too?

Runner Bio



Name: Tam Weaver
Age: Old enough to know better (44)
Occupation: School Librarian
Running ability: Plodder

WHY DO YOU RUN?

I started running when my children were babies. Now it's a fundamental part of my life, it keeps me sane and I've made good friends through running.

WHY THE YORKSHIRE MARATHON?

It was a family affair. Although I

THE PLUSNET YORKSHIRE MARATHON

Distance: 26.2 miles

Location: York

theyorkshiremarathon.com

live in Sussex, I grew up just outside York and my family all still live in Yorkshire. My brother-in-law had signed up and I was easily persuaded to join the party – what could be nicer than a family get together with a 'short' run around my old manor?

Marathons are emotional

things – they turn you inside out and getting to the finish line is as much about mental as physical strength; my Yorkshire Marathon was no exception. In June my dear Dad quietly passed away. It wasn't a tragedy, just the right time for his story to end. He was 92 and the last few years of his life

were hard as dementia took hold. Still, I miss him very much. Over the summer I found having the discipline of marathon training to focus on really helpful. I do a lot of rural and trail running and when I was out, surrounded by nature, I felt he was close by. Long runs gave me space to clear my mind and if occasionally I had a little cry, well, who was there to see other than the birds?

Training had its usual ups and downs: Running up all 17 hairpins of the Col Du Montvernier in the Alps was a massive high but my feet were unappreciative of the day I did 16 miles, then climbed out of my runners and into high heels



The atmosphere was incredibly jovial – which might be partly responsible for Tam's PB!



for a wedding! I work in a school and the new influx of students in September brought with it new germs. The week before I considered pulling out – despite physio I was nursing a painful heel and a chesty cough was slow to lift. But after talking to a good friend I decided to start, to focus on enjoying myself rather than worrying about time and to run-walk if necessary.

So then, this marathon would be for Dad. Yorkshire was his adopted county, living there for the last 40 years of his life. He was always incredibly positive and proud of everything my sisters and I attempted and achieved even when he didn't understand it. And although a

great sportsman (He played for Durham University's rugby 1st XV in 1948) he definitely did not get the point of running for its own sake and was bewildered when I, the least sporty of his daughters, took it up!

TELL US ABOUT THE EVENT?

Only in its third year, the Yorkshire Marathon already has a reputation as a destination marathon – a fast, predominantly flat course that weaves out of the city, past iconic York Minster and through pretty countryside and rural villages. The marathon village at York University was clearly signed with all the facilities you'd expect, including baggage drop and lots of toilets (important!). A park and ride system got runners efficiently to the village and buses took spectators to far flung parts of the course. The race began with the running community paying tribute to one of their own, with a minute's applause for David Colley who tragically died during this year's Great North Run. The Yorkshire Marathon should have been

his first marathon. The race was good natured with lots of camaraderie among the pack. There were plenty of water stations and toilets around the course, with isotonic drinks and gels also provided. Inevitably, the rural stretches had fewer spectators but all the villages were lined with locals, which helped keep me going. My least favourite section was miles 17 to 19, tough miles in any marathon, running along a boring 'A' road with two-way runners and a turn point that seemed to take forever to arrive. The organisers had anticipated this and had provided their own cheer point around mile 18 with sweets and a huge screen displaying race footage. The finish was packed and marshals enthusiastically encouraged us to the line. All finishers received a medal, technical t-shirt (Yorkshire sizing: my size small is a generous fit!) and goodie bag. There were minor issues with crowding around the exit with weary runners struggling to get through crowds of waiting families.

WHAT WAS THE BEST BIT?

The Minster bells were ringing out as I ran past at the two mile mark, a joyful sound which lifted me up and sent me on my way. Yorkshire knows how to throw a party: brass bands, African drums, cheer leaders and bag pipes. Churches blaring out rock music, teenagers on bikes handing out drinks and grannies with oranges all kept me smiling. My heel held out and I felt great. The sun shone but an October breeze meant the temperature was ideal. Each time I felt myself flagging physically or mentally, I took in the blue sky, reminded myself that I was in it to enjoy myself and thought of my Dad. It's a bit cheesy but I really felt as though he was with me all the way. Running towards the finish and realising I'd knocked over two minutes off my PB was amazing.

WOULD YOU DO IT AGAIN?

Absolutely. It's a well organised, friendly event with a fast course and PB potential.



THE LONDON ROYAL PARKS HALF MARATHON

When: 11 October

Where: Hyde Park

Runner Bio



Name: Emma Brennan
Age: 33
Occupation: Practice Nurse
Running ability: Beginner - novice

WHY DO YOU RUN?

Earlier this year a group of mums who live in the same village as me decided that it was time to get fit and get out, and we decided on jogging as our primary form of exercise. Initially we started lamp post to lamp post and at first that was actually quite tough, but with each session we got better and improved and soon progressed from 1k to 2k. Before long we had booked our first 5k race. I loved the buzz of the race and was inspired to sign up for my first 10k just five months after that first run. Then, after really enjoying that 10k I decided to push myself to the next level and applied for a place in the Royal Parks Half with the support of my sister-in-laws who would be coming along too and running with me.

TELL US ABOUT THE EVENT ON THE DAY

The Royal Parks Half Marathon takes place each October in London, starting and finishing in Hyde Park. Over 16,000 runners take part in the 13.1-mile route, which takes in the fantastic scenery of all the Royal Parks in the same race. It's a really popular race, so entry is by ballot, but I was able to get a charity place running for my local hospice Cynthia Spencer, which is a



charity close to all our hearts in Northampton, and I have been really well supported by everyone I've approached, raising just over £1,000 altogether in the end. My two sister-in-laws both ran for the NSPCC and raised a good amount of money too. There were lots of people all running for a variety of different charities on the day, with approximately £21 million raised to date.

WHAT DID YOU THINK WAS THE BEST BIT?

From start to finish I couldn't stop smiling; the scenery, atmosphere and organisation was all absolutely superb. The running surface was flat and steady so perfect for a first half marathon, and perfect for a PB, too. The morale and support from all the other runners and spectators is what keeps you going at the tough times when you just feel you really can't go on.

DO YOU THINK YOU WOULD YOU DO IT AGAIN?

Absolutely, yes. I had so much fun for the whole event, from start to finish. The atmosphere was electric with so much support from friends and family. In fact, I am searching for my next race now.

The Royal Parks has become such an iconic race that you need to enter a ballot for a chance of a place.



The Reigate Half Marathon starts and ends in an idyllic Surrey park.



RUN REIGATE HALF MARATHON

Distance: 13.1 miles

When: 20 Sept 2015

Where: Reigate, Surrey

Runner Bio



Name: Amy Curtis
Age: 36
Occupation: Editor of Running Fitness
Running ability:

Experienced

WHY THIS EVENT?

I seem to do all my running in London lately, so when a colleague suggested we enter this one, I was really keen. It weaves its way through the surrey countryside, so I was thinking it would be an attractive route with no polluted roads to negotiate.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

It's actually one of the better

running events I've been to, in terms of how organised it was. All of the local car parks had been reserved for runners to use, with a flat fee of £3 to pay (so no messing about with the pay-and-display machines), and the start line was in a huge, beautiful park with plenty of space to get yourself organised, buy a coffee or snack and go to the loo. That's another thing I was impressed with, there were plenty of portaloos, so the queues were minimal and fast, making pre-race nerves much more manageable. There were also clearly marked areas for different starting lines (although we did find ourselves in the warm-up section by accident when we were heading for the start!). The bag drop was quick and efficient too.



HOW DOES IT COMPARE TO OTHER RACES?

I don't want to go on about the loos, but it really was good to see that they had enough to avoid stressful queues – it's amazing how many events just don't install enough, which can really put a downer on your race. Also, the entire route was on closed roads, so we felt really relaxed the whole way round.

WHAT WAS THE ROUTE LIKE?

Closed roads meant that the paths were all quite wide, which was good for overtaking and just nice and spacious – once clear of the crowds, running

down the middle of a road between fields of cows and sheep was a very pleasant experience. It helped that the thick morning fog cleared quite quickly, so we found ourselves running in a very pleasant early-autumn sunshine.

HOW WELL ORGANISED WAS IT?

Very. From where to park to where to meet afterwards, I can't fault it. The main thing is that nobody is there to queue – we just want to get on with it – and this event seemed to completely understand that. This alone will get me back again next year – and I may even get a PB!

RF

IMAGES NIGEL LLOYD

FANCY BEING OUR NEXT ROVING REPORTER? Contact the team at rf.ed@kelsey.co.uk (making the subject of your email 'Roving reporter')

**RUNNING
ANY OF THESE
EVENTS?**

Share your photos and
stories on our facebook
page or tweet us



EVENTS PREVIEWS

RACE TO THE KING

The new ultra marathon that finishes
on the steps of Winchester Cathedral

A new ultra marathon, the Race to the King, has been launched by Threshold Sports as the sequel to the iconic Race to the Stones (racetothestones.com). Taking place on 25 and 26 June 2016, The Race to the King is a 52-mile ultra marathon which starts at the National Trust Slindon Estate in East Sussex and goes along the South Downs Way to Winchester Cathedral, the burial place of the first kings of England. The course celebrates some of the country's finest scenery, with views sweeping north over the Weald and stretching south out to sea.

It can be completed non-stop over two days, including camping, or participants can choose to do a single day on the Saturday or Sunday, with or without camping. It is designed for everyone from

Date: 25-26 June 2016

Location: Starts near Arundel (West Sussex); finishes at Winchester Cathedral (Hampshire)

Prices: £49-£184 (see website for individual entry and corporate packages)
racetotheking.com

walkers to elite runners and is the ideal ultra-distance challenge for those looking to take their first step beyond a marathon or who just love a challenge outdoors.

Just like the Race to the Stones, the Race to the King is fully supported. There is a signed route and all participants are given a map book with information about the route. Pit stops roughly every five to six miles have toilets, food, drinks and medical support, and foot health experts will help tend and dress sore feet. The overnight base camp offers a hot dinner and hearty breakfast, hot showers, stretching classes and physio guides, massages, local beer bars and light entertainment.

The start and finish are easily accessible by train and there will be transport available from the station to the start and the finish as well as bag transport for all participants.

Nick Tuppen, managing director of Threshold Sports, says: "We are very excited to be launching the Race to the King. Like the Race to the Stones, it celebrates Britain's beauty, rich history and spectacular wildlife. It is a breathtaking challenge whether you are 18 or 80 and we'll be there supporting people every step from sign-up to when they cross the finish line."



**"It is the ideal ultra-distance for
those looking to take their first step
beyond a marathon."**

RUNBALMORAL 2016

Regal runs through the grounds of Balmoral Castle

Date: 23-24 April 2016

Location: Balmoral Castle estate, Aberdeenshire, Scotland

Prices: (see website)

runbalmoral.com

Entries are open for the 2016 RunBalmoral races ranging from 1.5k to 15 miles, taking place over the weekend of 23-24 April in the magnificent grounds of Balmoral Castle. The Royal estate offers one of the most dramatic settings for a running event, not just in the UK, but worldwide.

The race weekend programme will kick off on the Saturday with the MPH Ltd primary schools 1.5k boys' and girls' races, followed by the Kongsberg Maritime secondary schools 2.5k, the ConocoPhillips 5k and the Stena Drilling Tartan 10k. The 5k and 10k also include a corporate team challenge competition. Sunday sees the Apollo duathlon (5k run/20k cycle/5k run), the Glacier Energy Trail Race (15 miles) and the Wee Trail race (3 miles – for the past two years the Wee Trail race has been part of the jogscotland challenge series).

Last year more than 5,000 runners of all ages signed up for the programme of eight races and, in keeping with the strong community focus of the event, these Balmoral runners raised well over £100,000 for local charities.

With thousands of spectators coming along to support the runners, the estate will



be buzzing with excitement and for those not taking part there is an opportunity to visit the Event Village where a range of activities for all ages will be on offer.

RunBalmoral Chairman James Knowles said: "We are looking forward to another successful year... The 5k course is part of what was previously a longer, five mile course, on which Paula Radcliffe set world record times of 24:54 in 1998 and 24:47 in 1999 so it's ideal for a championship event.

"However, all our races promise to be exciting events in which experienced

international athletes and first-time fun runners will rub shoulders as they compete on traffic-free courses offering magnificent views of the castle and the spectacular surrounding countryside.

"I'd like to advise runners to enter as soon as possible. Many of the races sold out well before the official closing date last year, so anyone thinking about taking part is encouraged to sign up quickly."

Full entry details and further information about this event can be found at runbalmoral.com.



LIDL KINGSTON BREAKFAST RUN

An ideal event to liven up spring marathon training

Date: 3 April 2016

Location: Kingston-upon-Thames, London

Prices: £28-34

humanrace.co.uk/running

The London Marathon ballot places have been announced, which can only mean one thing – it's time to start planning your spring marathon training. The Lidl Kingston Breakfast Run on Sunday 3 April offers

competitors distances of 8.2, 16.2 and 20 miles, and pacers will be available running at 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 minutes per mile.

The fast and flat course starts and finishes in the historic Kingston-upon-Thames market square and runs along the River Thames, past the outstanding Hampton Court Palace and over the renowned Hampton Court Bridge. Provisional start time for 20 miles: 8am; 8.2 and 16 miles: 8:30am. There will be regular timing mats for detailed post-race pace feedback, well-stocked water/food stations, electronic chip timing and results sent to your mobile phone as you cross the line. Race partner Lidl will greet all runners at the finish line with some special goody bags.

Nick Rusling, CEO of organisers Human Race, said: "Over the past 25 years the Lidl Kingston Breakfast Run has become a popular part of the running calendar and we are pleased to bring it back for 2016. This is one of the very few times that you will ever see 16- or 20-mile distances

offered at an event, which we hope will help runners hit their marathon goals."

Breast Cancer Care is the official charity partner of the Lidl Kingston Breakfast Run, with all participants encouraged to raise money that will go towards providing vital support services for anyone affected by breast cancer. There is no minimum fundraising target and it's easy to set up a Just Giving online donation page when registering for the event.

COURSE RECORDS

MALE

8.2 mile Phil Wicks 0:40:15 2006

16 mile Phil Wicks 1:20:47 2011

FEMALE

8.2 mile Tish Jones 0:45:34 2014

16 mile Jo Lodge 1:34:17 2000

Entry deadline is 9am on 29 March 2016 (or earlier if full). To sign up to Lidl Kingston Breakfast Run please visit: humanrace.co.uk/event/lidl-kingston-breakfast-run

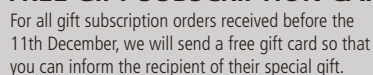


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EVENTS LOCATOR

Inspired to take part in a race? Our **EVENTS LISTING** guide has some of the best races coming up

EVENTS CHANGES!

In order to make these listings as current as possible, we now only list events taking place within the six months following the on-sale date of each issue. Events are listed via region. If you'd like to search for events further ahead, please go to www.run247.com. As always, it's advisable to check race details with organisers nearer the date.

*The editor reserves the right to edit listings, and cannot be held responsible for errors.

LONDON

Road

27 November 2015

BROOKS, SERPENTINE LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH 5K

The Bandstand, Hyde Park, London

W2 2UH

£2.00 / £4.00

Serpentine Running Club

35 Merton Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 0AA

020 8422 3900

lfotm5k@serpentine.org.uk

serpentine.org.uk

5km

LONDON

Multi Terrain

28 November 2015

THE 10K MO RUN GREENWICH PARK LONDON 2015

Greenwich Park SE10 8QY

£20

The Fix UK Ltd

The Fix UK, Suite 2, 31 Ashley Road, Epsom,

Surrey KT18 5BD

020 8144 0797

info@thefixevents.com

<http://london-greenwich.mo-running.com/>

10km

WEST MIDLANDS

Road

28 November 2015

32ND ANNUAL CHEDDLETON 10K CHRISTMAS PUDDING RACE

Cheddleton, Leek, Staffordshire ST13 7HP

AAA club Members £10. Others £12.00

Stan Winterton

Brook House Farm Brook House Lane

Cheddleton Leek Staffordshire ST13 7DF

01538 360296

s.e.winterton@btconnect.com

cheddletoncarnival.co.uk

10km

NORTH EAST

Road

29 November 2015

RUN NORTHUMBERLAND BIG 10 MILER

Kirkley Hall

NE20 0AQ

£12.50 (Club) or \$14.50 (Unattached)

Richard Hunter

14C Airport Industrial Estate Newcastle upon

Tyne Tyne and Wear NE3 2EF

07731 722741

info@run-nation.org

run-nation.org

10miles

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain

29 November 2015

BRETT ASHFORD 10K

Julie Rose Stadium, Ashford

TN24 9QX

£15

Tri Spirit Events - Liz King

2 Harlakenden Cottages, Woodchurch, Kent

TN26 3PS

01233 860265

liz@trispirevents.com

trispirevents.com/events/brett-ashford-half-marathon/

10km

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain

29 November 2015

BRETT ASHFORD HALF MARATHON

Julie Rose Stadium, Ashford TN24 9QX

£18

Tri Spirit Events - Liz King

2 Harlakenden Cottages, Woodchurch, Kent

TN26 3PS

01233 860265

liz@trispirevents.com

trispirevents.com/events/brett-ashford-half-marathon/

13miles

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain

29 November 2015

MAPLEDURHAM TEN

Mapledurham House

£24

Andy Macaskill

events@mysportingtimes.com

mapledurhamten.co.uk

10miles

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain

29 November 2015

THE 5K AND 10K BRIGHTON MORUN 2015

Stanmer Park BN1 9SE

£20 for the 10k; £16 for the 5k

The Fix UK Ltd

The Fix UK, Suite 2, 31 Ashley Road, Epsom,

Surrey KT18 5BD

020 8144 0797

info@thefixevents.com

mo-running.com/brighton

10km

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain

29 November 2015

THREE MOLEHILLS

Denbies Wine Estate RH5 6AA

Team £48 affiliated £50 unaffiliated, individual

£21 affiliated £23 unaffiliated

Alan Burrows

Three Molehills 74 Church Street Leatherhead

Surrey KT22 8EN

07952 349226

info@eventstolive.co.uk

eventstolive.co.uk

15miles

EAST MIDLANDS

Road

05 December 2015

NO WALK IN THE PARK

Queen's Park Cricket Pavilion, Chesterfield

S40 2ND

£3/£5 On the day only

John Cannon

01246 566458

j.cannon846@btinternet.com

<http://northderbyshirec.jimdo.com/>

5km

NORTH EAST

Trail

05 December 2015

'KIELDER' NIGHT TRAIL 10KM

Kielder Castle

£15

High Terrain Events

07535 818107

info@highterrainevents.co.uk

highterrainevents.co.uk/#kielder-10km-night-run/cguk

10km

NORTH WEST

Trail

05 December 2015

NO EGO CHALLENGE WHINLATTER FOREST HEAD TORCH RACE

Whinlatter Forest CA12 5TW

£13.00

Brian Lee

27, Woodville Park

Cockermouth Cumbria

CA13 0GW

07803 406070

info@noegochallenge.com

noegochallenge.com

5miles

SOUTH EAST

Cross Country

05 December 2015

GRIM

Aldershot GU11 2HL

info@grimchallenge.co.uk

grimchallenge.co.uk/grim-8/

8miles

SOUTH EAST

Trail

05 December 2015

TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL 10KM - EAST

Cuxton, Kent ME2 1AF

£29.50

Trailscape

info@trailscape.co.uk

trailscape.co.uk

10km

SOUTH EAST

Trail

05 December 2015

TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL HALF MARATHON - EAST

Cuxton, Kent ME2 1AF

£35

Trailscape

info@trailscape.co.uk

trailscape.co.uk

13.1miles

SOUTH EAST

Trail

05 December 2015

TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL MARATHON - EAST

Cuxton, Kent ME2 1AF

£40

Trailscape

info@trailscape.co.uk

trailscape.co.uk

26.2miles

SOUTH WEST

Trail

05 December 2015

CTS DORSET

Lulworth Cove BH20 5RQ

£30.00 - £60.00

Endurancelife

01548 312314

support@endurancelife.com

endurancelife.com/

10miles

SOUTH WEST

Trail

05 December 2015

ICEMAN

Army Training Ground, Frimley, Surrey

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020 8391 3913
races@humanrace.co.uk
[http://humanrace.co.uk/events/off-Road/](http://humanrace.co.uk/events/off-Road/iceman)
iceman
11km

WALES

Multi Terrain
05 December 2015
MIGHT CONTAIN NUTS MARATHON RD4
 Brecon Beacons LD3 7JE
Might Contain Nuts
 2 Woodlands Heol - Las Talgarth Powys
 LD3 0PH
mightcontainnuts.com
 26miles

WALES

Road
05 December 2015
MIGHT CONTAIN NUTS TRAIL RD4
Brecon Beacons LD3 7JE
Might Contain Nuts
2 Woodlands Heol - Las Talgarth Powys
LD3 0PH
mightcontainnuts.com
10miles

WALES

Multi Terrain
05 December 2015
MIGHT CONTAIN NUTS ULTRA RD4
 Brecon Beacons LD3 7JE
Might Contain Nuts
 2 Woodlands Heol - Las Talgarth Powys
 LD3 0PH
 mightcontainnuts.com
 40miles

LONDON

Road
06 December 2015
PERIVALE 5
United Kingdom UB6 8TJ
tbc
Laurence Messer
Silver Leys 25 Birchdale Gerrards Cross
Buckinghamshire SL9 7JA
020 8997 4872
laurence_messer@hotmail.com
esm.org.uk
5miles

SOUTH EAST

Multi-terrain
06 December 2015
HOG'S BACK ROAD RACE
Losely House, Guildford Surrey
Hogsbackrun.co.uk
£19
11.7km

NORTH WEST

Multi Terrain
06 December 2015
TATTON YULE YOMP
Egerton Youth Club, Knutsford WA16 6SL
£17 (£15 affiliated)

Nicky Owen

race@tattonyuleyomp.co.uk
http://tattonyuleyomp.co.uk/
10km

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 December 2015
ALAN GREEN MEMORIAL 10 MILE
 Westgate, Kent CT8 8QW
 £18
John Hunt
 Thanet Coastal 10, 19 Favourite Road,
 Whitstable, Kent CT5 4UB
thanet10@thanetRoadrunners.org.uk
thanetRoadrunners.org.uk/events/thanet-coastal-10?q=alan-green-memorial-10-mile-race-2015
 10miles

SOUTH EAST

Road
06 December 2015
BEDDINGTON PARK 10KM
Beddington Park, Pavilion Cafe, Wallington,
Surrey SM6 7NH
£13
Mark Caswell
mark.caswell@btinternet.com
mccpromotions10kseries.com/beddington-
park-10km.php
10km

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain
06 December 2015
DOWNLAND DEVIL
 Coombes Farm BN15 0RS
 £10.00 att 12.00 unatt Extra £1.00 on day
Peter Wirtzfeld
 4 Thatch Court The Street Lancing West Sussex
 BN15 0PL
 01903 755266
 cobbeld@btinternet.com
 worthingstriders.co.uk
 9miles

SOUTH EAST

Cross Country
06 December 2015
GRIM
Aldershot GU11 2HL
info@grimchallenge.co.uk
grimchallenge.co.uk/grim-8/
8miles

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain
06 December 2015
JINGLE JOG
Frimley Lodge Park GU16 6HY
£12 Non-affiliated £10 Affiliated £8 under 16yrs
Cliff Hilton
07774 754141
cliff.hilton@oracle.com
jinglejog.co.uk
5km

SOUTH WEST

Road

06 December 2015

BATH SKYLINE 10KM SERIES

University of Bath - West Car Park BA2 7JY
£16/£18
Relish The Great Outdoors Ltd
tom@relishrunningraces.com
relishrunningraces.com/bath-skyline-10km.
php
10km

SOUTH WEST

Multi Terrain
06 December 2015
SANTA DASH FOR DOROTHY HOUSE HOSPICE
 Dorothy House BA15 2LE
 £12 before 13/11/15; £17 after
Emily Knight
 01225 722988
emily.knight@dorothyhouse-hospice.org.uk
dorothyhouse.org.uk/events/santa-dash-2015/
 4miles

NORTH WEST

Trail
12 December 2015
PETZL NIGHT RUNNER - GRIZEDALE FOREST
 Grizedale Visitor Centre LA22 0QJ
 £25
Epic Events
info@epicevents.co.uk
thenightrunner.com
 10km

SOUTH EAST

Road
12 December 2015
SANTA DASH BRIGHTON
Hove Lawns, Brighton BN3 2FR
info@inmotionsport.com
santadashbrighton.co.uk/
5km

LONDON

Multi Terrain
13 December 2015
SECOND SUNDAY 5 MILES
 Ricardson Evans Memorial Fields SW153PQ
 £5 (3 for club members)
Thames HandH Running Club
 dssymons@hotmail.com
 secondsunday5.com
 5miles

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE

Multi Terrain
13 December 2015
LEEDS CHRISTMAS 10K CHALLENGE
 John Charles Centre for Sport
 LS11 5DJ
 £12.50/15
Alice Fairhall
 0114 221 6427
races@fairplayevents.co.uk
fairplayevents.co.uk
 10km

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LONDON

Road

18 December 2015

BROOKS, SERPENTINE LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH 5K

The Bandstand, Hyde Park, London W2 2UH

£2.00 / £4.00

Serpentine Running Club

35 Merton Road, Harrow, Middlesex

lftm5k@serpentine.org.uk

serpentine.org.uk

5km

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain

20 December 2015

MUDDY WELLY 10KM AND 5KM TRAIL RUNS

Wellington College RG45 7PU

£18

ANDY MACASKILL

events@mysportingtimes.com

mudywelly.com

10km

EAST

Road

28 December 2015

BUNTINGFORD YEAR END 10

Freman College Buntingford SG9 9BT

£17 Affiliated £19 Unaffiliated

Royston Runners

buntingford10@roystonrunners.co.uk

roystonrunners.co.uk

10miles

SOUTH EAST

Cross Country

28 December 2015

BRUTAL LONGMOOR

Longmoor Camp GU33 6AZ

£18

Becky Russell

info@brutalrun.co.uk

brutalrun.co.uk/race/longmoor/

10km

SOUTH EAST

Multi Terrain

28 December 2015

GUT BUSTER

Butlers Lands Farm RG7 2AG

£25

Andy Macaskill

events@mysportingtimes.com

thegutbuster.co.uk

10miles

LONDON

Multi Terrain

10 January 2016

SECOND SUNDAY 5 MILES

Richardson Evans Memorial Fields SW15 3PQ

£5 (£3 for club members)

Thames HandH Running Club

dssymons@hotmail.com

secondsunday5.com

5miles

NORTH WEST

Trail

16 January 2016

PETZL NIGHT RUNNER - RIVINGTON

Rivington and Blackrod High School, Horwich

£25

Epic Events info@epicevents.co.uk

thenightrunner.com

10km

SOUTH WEST

Trail

17 January 2016

BATH SKYLINE 10KM SERIES

University of Bath - West Car Park BA2 7JY

£16/£18

Relish The Great Outdoors Ltd

relishrunningraces.com/bath-skyline-10km.

php

10km

SOUTH EAST

Trail

23 January 2016

TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL 10KM - SOUTH

Ashurst, Kent TN3 9TE

£29.50

Trailscape info@Trailscape.co.uk

Trailscape.co.uk

10km

SOUTH EAST

Trail

23 January 2016

TRAILScape RAIL TO TRAIL HALF MARATHON - SOUTH

Ashurst, Kent TN3 9TE

£35

Trailscape

info@Trailscape.co.uk

Trailscape.co.uk

13.1miles



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JOHN BREWER

FINAL THOUGHTS

John says **BLOOD SCREENING DATA** should just be used as an indicator for closer scrutiny

Once again running and athletics have been making the front and back page headlines for all of the wrong reasons, with new allegations and rumours of doping and “suspicious” blood data occurring on what seems at times to be a weekly basis. I have written about this subject before, but recently I’ve become increasingly frustrated that many in the media seem to not understand the role that blood screening of athletes plays in the battle to uphold clean sport. In particular, the distinction between the testing of blood and urine samples for substances banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), and the separate role and use of blood screening data, seems to have been lost at times.

Elite athletes are tested for WADA banned substances regularly, both in and out of competition, at events, in training, at their homes or when at training camps. This will involve the collection of two samples of blood or urine, and if both are found to have traces of a banned substance within them, it is likely the athlete will face a ban. Athletes will be tested simply because they are performing at the highest level in their discipline or because of prior intelligence that suggests to the authorities that a particular individual is worthy of closer scrutiny. This is where blood screening can have a role to play.

YEARS OF DATA

Some years ago, the ‘Athlete Biological Passport’ (ABP) was introduced, which is a means of regularly monitoring an athlete’s blood over a period of time. It is worth bearing in mind that there is a large number of variables measured, and of course these are taken from athletes who in themselves are elite, and therefore very different to the rest of us. Furthermore, they are understandably following training and nutritional practices that are designed to enable them to reach peak condition at specific times of the year. In addition to the blood data collected and used by the authorities as part of an ABP, many coaches will also have their athletes’ blood

It’s easy to forget that there are different levels when it comes to screening.



analysed and screened by independent laboratories to ensure that their training is on track, or that they are not at risk of illness. So as a result, there are an awful lot of data points, which for many experienced athletes stretch over months and years.

TRAFFIC LIGHT THEORY

When speaking with the media on this subject recently, I likened blood screening data to a traffic light. When all the data points are within the normal expected range, the traffic light is on ‘green’ and nothing further needs to be done. However if there is an occasional data point that is outside the expected range, this could trigger an ‘amber’ light, perhaps warranting closer inspection to see if further investigation is required. For example, in the case of many of the blood variables, there is often more than one that could indicate if there was a problem. If one is ‘abnormal’, but two or three others that measure a similar area are normal, it is likely that no further action is needed. More detailed conversations with the coach or

athlete may even reveal that the ‘abnormal’ value was exactly what was expected after a specific training or nutritional regimen. On the other hand, if blood screening data consistently show values outside of the normal range, perhaps combined with rapid changes over a short time (and even significant improvements in performance), this could well be seen as a ‘red’ light, which definitely merits further investigation and the potential for targeted testing of the athlete.

The key fact that often gets overlooked is that you cannot ‘fail’ this type of blood screening – it is used as an indicator, in combination with other factors such as training or performances – to determine whether an individual should be placed under closer scrutiny. Alongside this, we know that few elite athletes will have physiological profiles that are normal when compared to the rest of us – if they did, they would probably not be elite athletes. So we must remain measured in our response to data, question and challenge, but not over-react until all of the facts are known.



John Brewer is a Professor of Applied Sport Science at St Mary’s University, Twickenham. He was previously director of communications for Lucozade Sport and before that director of the Lillleshall Sports Injury and Human Performance Centre **Follow John on Twitter @sportprofbrewer**

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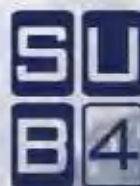
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